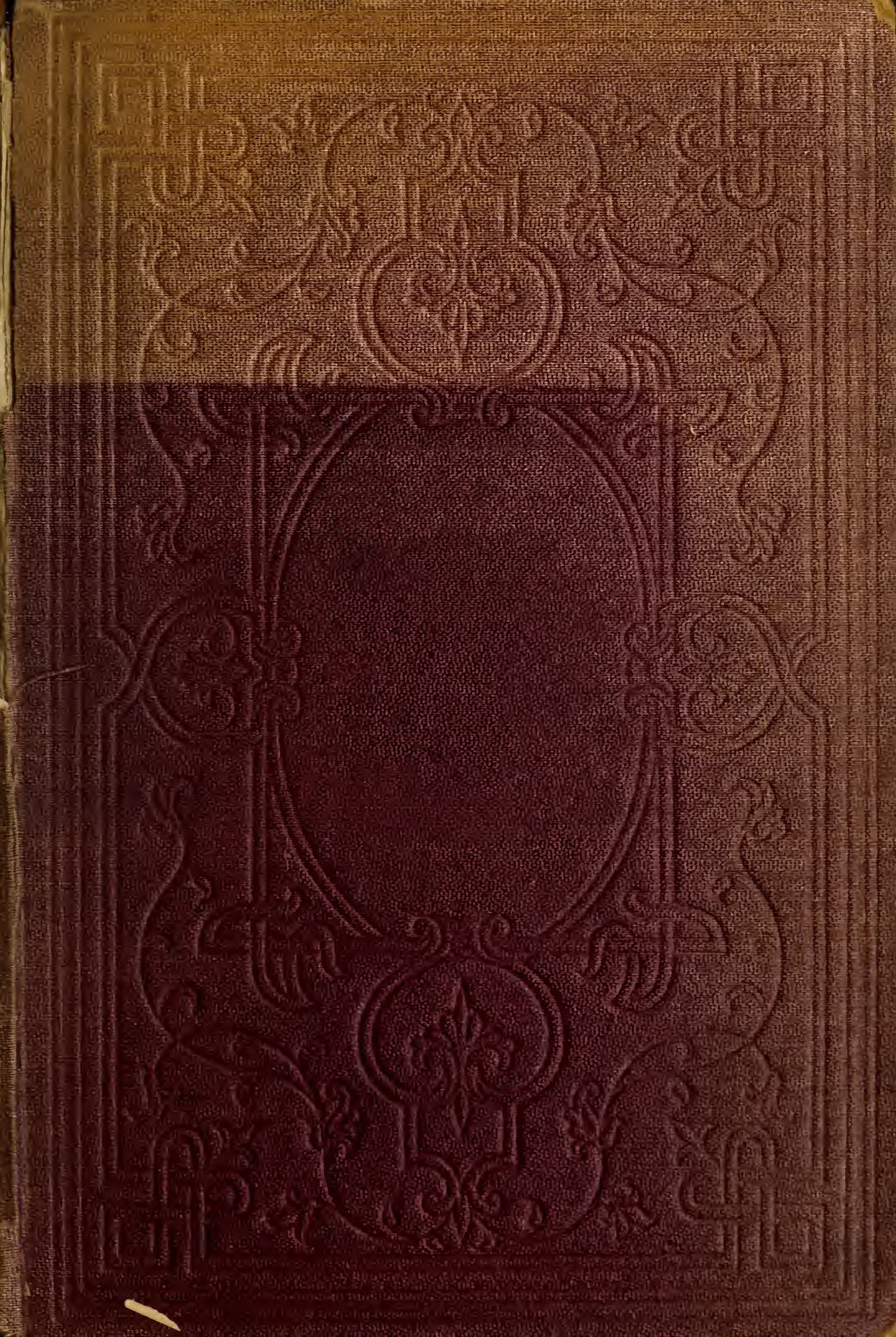




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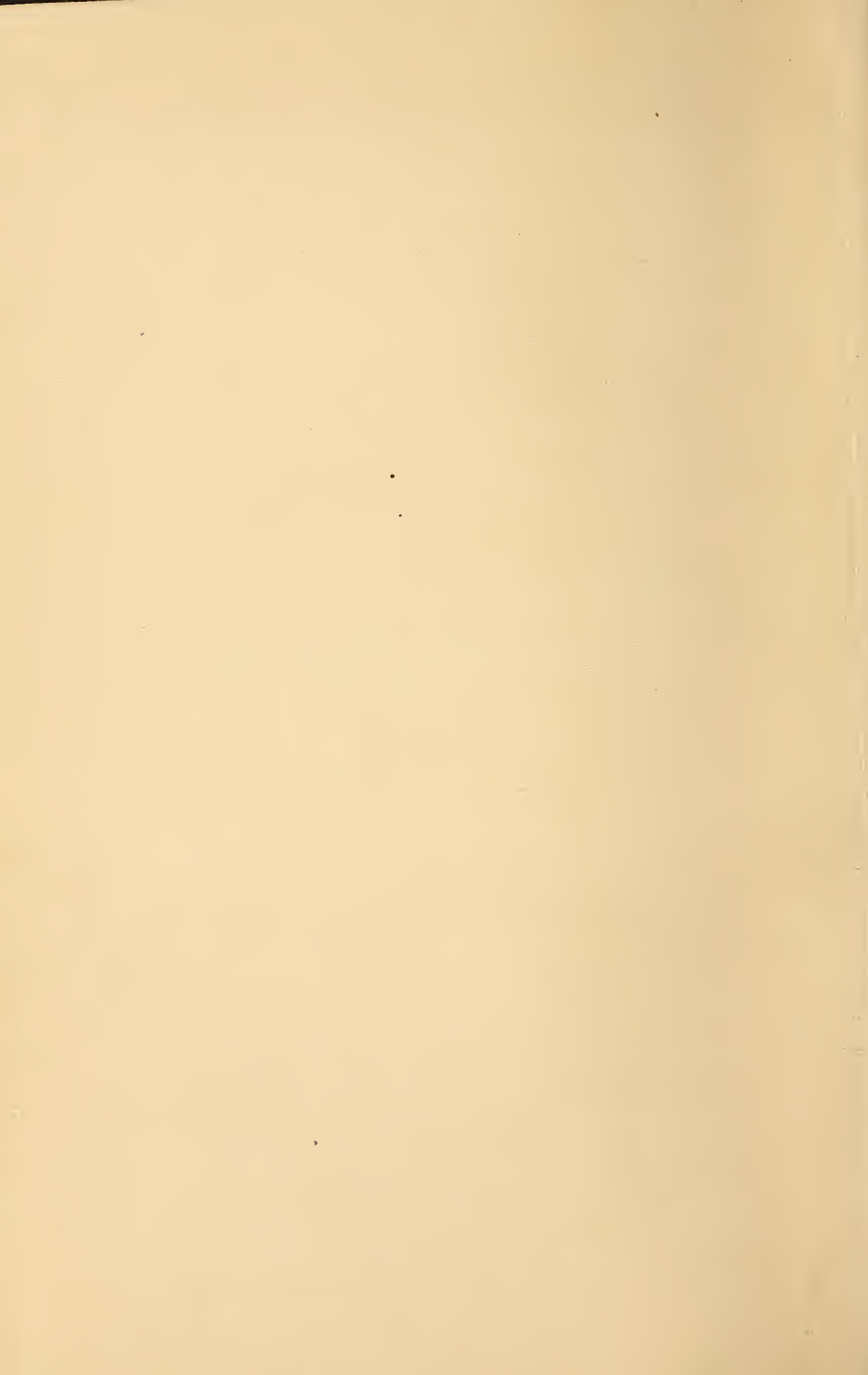
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WITH PRAYERS,

FOR EVERY DAY IN A MONTH.

BY
MARY CARPENTER.

AUTHOR OF
"SIX MONTHS IN INDIA," "OUR CONVICTS," "JUVENILE DELINQUENTS,"
ETC., ETC.

Fifth Edition, with Additions.



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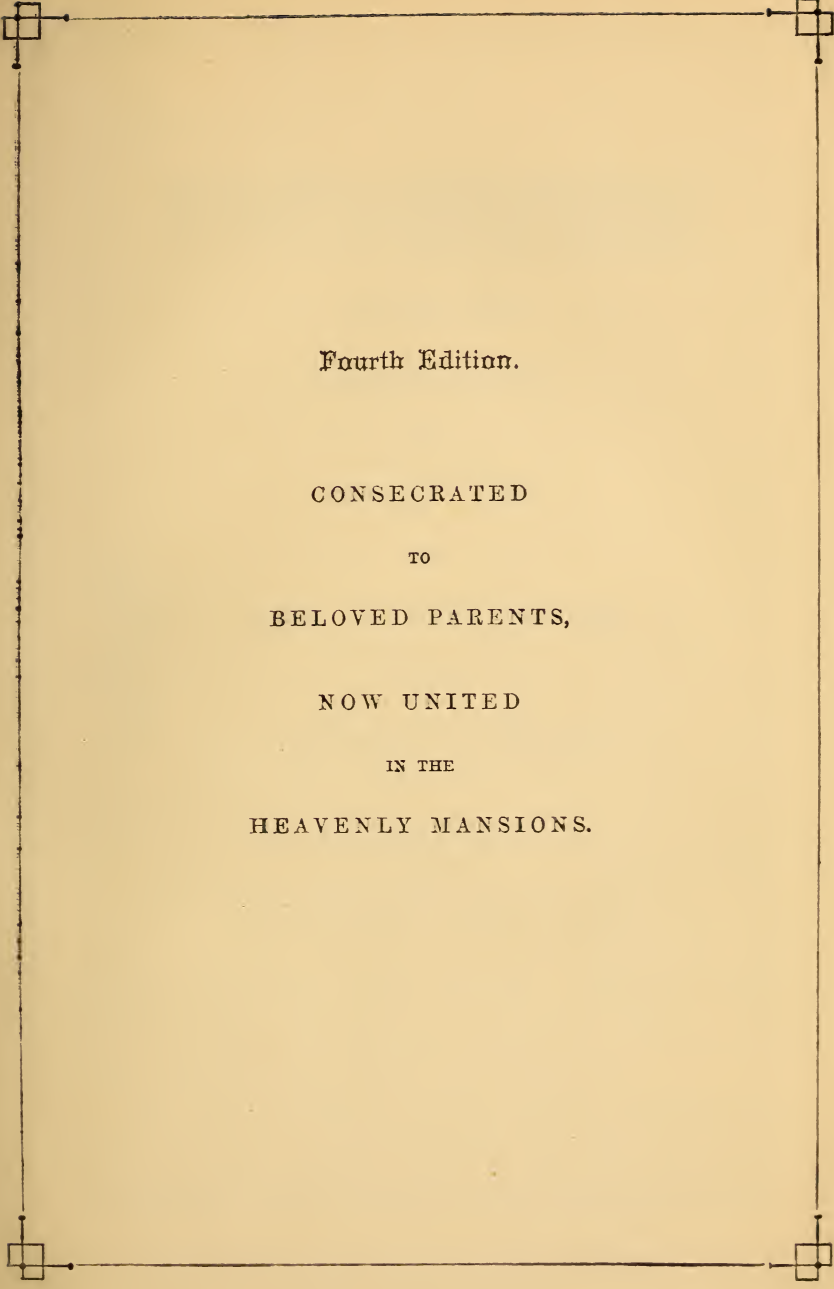
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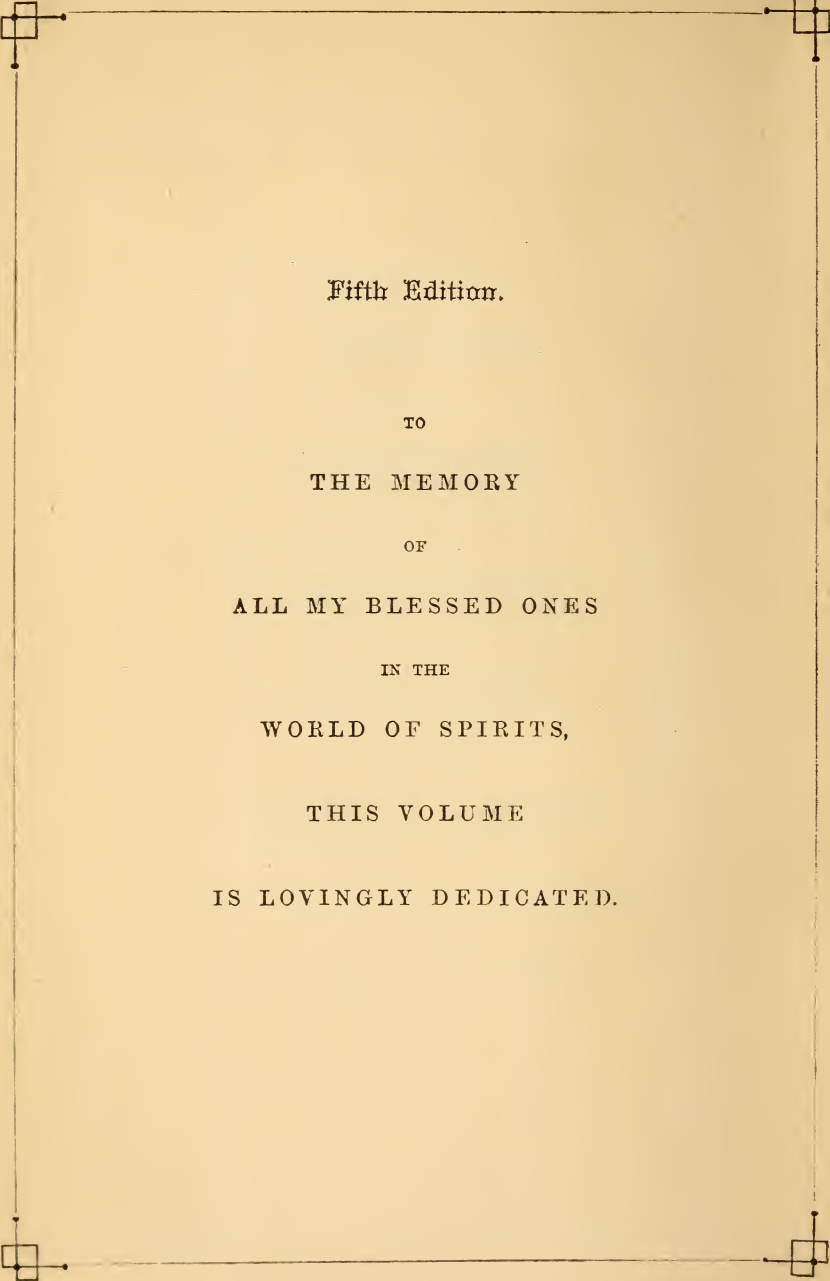
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OF
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P R E F A C E.

THIS work was published anonymously above twenty years ago, without the prayers. It was prepared with a view to assist in that private meditation on the Scriptures which will make them to the heart of each individual profitable for edification, strength and comfort, and which is the best preparation for private prayer. A cheaper edition, for popular use, was prepared by the author's brother, the Rev. P. P. CARPENTER, with the addition of prayers, chiefly his own. These have been introduced into the present and previous edition, with some selected and written by the author.

The hopes entertained in the original preparation of this little volume have been fully realized;—it has met the religious wants of persons of all denominations;—

it has comforted the mourning hours and solaced the dying bed of many; while it has been the closet companion of numbers, without respect of creed;—the spirit knows no such distinction, when in felt communion with its Maker.

May such be still its blessed mission!

RED LODGE HOUSE,

BRISTOL, *June* 18, 1868.





INDEX OF AUTHORS.

The Pieces marked * have not before been published.
The Hymns marked + are derived from "Hymns for the Christian Church and Home," edited by the Rev. J. Martineau.

FIRST WEEK.

		PROSE.	POETRY.
SUNDAY	Morning ...	*Dr. Tuckerman ...	Sir J. Bowring.
"	Evening ...	*M. C. ...	+J. Montgomery.
MONDAY	Morning ...	Dr. Tuckerman ...	Anonymous.
"	Evening ...	*W. James ...	J. Montgomery.
TUESDAY	Morning ...	C. Wellbeloved ...	B. Barton (altered).
"	Evening ...	*M. C. ...	Newton.
WEDNESDAY	Morning ...	*M. C. ...	Anonymous.
"	Evening ...	*R. L. Carpenter ...	+Wesley.
THURSDAY	Morning ...	*Dr. Carpenter ...	*Dr. Tuckerman.
"	Evening ...	*M. C. ...	Anonymous.
FRIDAY	Morning ...	*M. C. ...	Merrick.
"	Evening ...	*R. L. Carpenter ...	+Heber.
SATURDAY	Morning ...	*M. C. ...	J. Taylor.
"	Evening ...	*R. L. Carpenter ...	Dr. Carpenter.

SECOND WEEK.

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"	Evening	... *M. C.		*M. C.
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"	Evening	... Dr. Channing...		*Dr. Tuckerman.
TUESDAY	Morning	... H. Ware		Christian Examiner.
"	Evening	... Jer. Taylor	... ..	+Quarles.
WEDNESDAY	Morning	... C. Wellbeloved	... ..	Wesley.
"	Evening	... *M. C.	... ..	Anonymous.
THURSDAY	Morning	... *Mrs. S. Bache	... ..	Mrs. S. Bache.
"	Evening	... *M. C.	... ..	+Toplady.
FRIDAY	Morning	... F. W. P. Greenwood	... ..	*Dr. Tuckerman.
"	Evening	... *M. C.		Sir J. Bowring.
SATURDAY	Morning	... *R. L. Carpenter		+Milman.
"	Evening	... *M. C.		Wesley.

THIRD WEEK.

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"	Evening	... *M. C.		*M. C.
MONDAY	Morning	... *Dr. Carpenter		J. Wesley (translated from Gerhardt).
"	Evening	... F. W. P. Greenwood	... ..	*Sir J. Bowring.
TUESDAY	Morning	... Dr. Tuckerman	... ..	H. Ware.
"	Evening	... *M. C.	... ..	+Wesley.
WEDNESDAY	Morning	... *J. B. Estlin	... ..	*J. B. Estlin.
"	Evening	... *M. C.	... ..	+Heber.
THURSDAY	Morning	... *R. L. Carpenter	... ..	+Hemans.
"	Evening	... *M. C.	... ..	*M. C.
FRIDAY	Morning	... *M. C.		+Gerhardt.
"	Evening	... *M. C.		H. Moore.
SATURDAY	Morning	... *M. C.		*M. C.
"	Evening	... R. Watson		Mrs. Fisher.

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"	Evening ...	*M. C. ...	... G. Bulfinch.
MONDAY	Morning ...	*M. C. ...	... *M. C.
"	Evening ...	*M. C. ...	... +J. Montgomery.
TUESDAY	Morning ...	R. Watson ...	... +Jer. Taylor.
"	Evening ...	*Dr. Carpenter ...	... J. Taylor.
WEDNESDAY	Morning ...	*G. Armstrong...	... +Newton.
"	Evening ...	*M. C. ...	... Sabbath Recreations.
THURSDAY	Morning ...	*M. C. ...	... +J. F. Oberlin.
"	Evening ...	*M. C. ...	... +Hemans.
FRIDAY	Morning ...	*P. P. Carpenter ...	... Sir J. Bowring.
"	Evening ...	*R. L. Carpenter ...	... G. Bulfinch.
SATURDAY	Morning ...	H. Ware ...	... Doddridge.
"	Evening ...	*R. L. Carpenter ...	... Dr. Carpenter.

PARTICULAR OCCASIONS.

Invitation to the Lord's

Supper Jer. Taylor.

Preparation for the

Lord's Supper... ... Jer. Taylor (altered).

Meditation at the Lord's

Supper *M. C. +J. Montgomery.

Meditation after the

Lord's Supper... ... *R. L. Carpenter ... J. Rowe.

Christmas Day A. A. Livermore ... +Hemans.

Good Friday *M. C. Milman.

Easter Sunday *M. C. +Anonymous.

Ascension Day *M. C. M. C.

The Saviour's Promise... *M. C. *L. Sanford.

In Case of Severe Illness Farr C. Richardson.

In Case of Death... ... *P. P. Carpenter ... Heber.

Last Day in the Year ... H. Ware H. Hutton.

The Living Temple ... *M. C.

Prayer *J. Martineau.

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Sonnet	Blanco White.
Ursa Major	H. Ware.
Summer's Evening Meditation	Mrs. Barbauld.
Address to the Deity	Mrs. Barbauld.
Ode to Immortality	M. C.
Aspiration	*M. C.
Dedication	*M. C.
Joy	M. C.
Sorrow	M. C.
Guardian Angels	*M. C.
The Departed	*M. C.
Sonnet on John xv., 12	Anonymous.
Nearer to Thee	Mrs. S. A. Adams.
"Abide with us"	Lyte.
Lead, kindly Light	Anonymous.
Hymn of Praise	B. Carpenter.

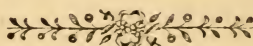
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BY THE LATE REV. DR. LANT CARPENTER.

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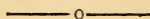
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MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

FIRST WEEK.

SUNDAY MORNING.

Lamentations iii., 40.—Let us search and try
our ways.

HAVE finished the stage of another week in the journey of my life! Where have I been within that week? With whom have I communicated by conversation or by letter? What have I done? By what principles have I been guided in all my intercourse, in every transaction? What has been the character, and what the tendency of my thoughts? Have I been kind in every disposition; just in every feeling I have indulged, and in every judgment I have formed; pure in every desire; upright in every purpose; true in every word, and faithful to my sense of duty in every action? O my Father, Thou knowest my heart, help me also to know it! I would judge myself by that rule of duty to Thee, to my own soul, and to my fellow-beings, which Christ has given, and by which I am at last to be judged before Thee.

When and where have I been faithful? What have I neglected which I should have done? When, where, and how have I transgressed Thy commandments?

I have entered upon a new week. What may this week be to me? What is before me even in the passing day? How deep the darkness which hangs over even the passing hour! And from whence and why is this darkness? O Thou who art light, and who dwellest in everlasting light, with Thee there is no uncertainty respecting either time or eternity. Where, then, Father, shall I look for direction, or for security, but to Thee? I will walk, Father, I will live by the faith that Thou art, and that Thou art the rewarder of them that diligently seek Thee. I will make it my care every day, and in all things, to enjoy and to endure as seeing Thee who art invisible. O help me in all my ways to acknowledge Thee, and in all to endeavour faithfully to obey Thee, that Thou mayest direct my steps! Eternal adoration and thanksgivings be given Thee for him, Thy holy Son Jesus, who died to redeem *me* and *all* from all iniquity, and to purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. O that from this hour, no sin might ever triumph in my heart, or have any dominion over me! Father, I would live by the faith, that it is better, infinitely better, to enter into Thine eternal kingdom, and to be an heir of the Christian's blessedness, at the cost of any present self-restraint, self-denial, or self-sacrifice in the cause of duty and Thy will, than to attain any attainable or conceivable good of earth and time, at the expense of the violation of even a single Christian principle. Whatever my hand or my heart shall find to do under the promptings of conscience, and the guidance of Thy will, I would do it with all my might.

I would be zealous for spiritual growth; for spiritual mindedness; for the attainment of the spirit of Christ,—the mind that was in Christ. Like him, I would make it my meat and drink to do *all Thy* will, and to finish all the work Thou hast given me to do. In sympathy with Jesus, I would look upon every human being as my brother,—the child of our Heavenly Father; and whatever I would in any relation, condition, or transaction, that any one should do to me, that will I endeavour faithfully to do to him. With these purposes and prayers in my heart, I welcome and bless Thee for this day, sacred to my soul by its associations with him who died, and rose again, and brought life and immortality to perfect light. May all the exercises of this day strengthen me in the principles of my immortal well-being! Thus may this day be made to me a preparation and pledge of an eternal rest, an eternal day, with Thee and Christ, and the spirits of the just made perfect; and Thine, Father, shall be the glory for ever!

THOU, whose high praise in heaven and earth is sung,
Each heart pervading, tuning every tongue;
Thou, whom my soul devoutly would confess
In joy's bright hour,—nor in affliction's less;
Whose mercy in the sunshine and the storm
Alike is active,—whose invisible form
Rides in the hurricane;—Thou, whose depths profound,
And heights sublime, not earth nor heaven can sound;
Infinite power, and goodness without bound!

Thou unseen cause, conductor, end of all,
We know Thee not,—yet God and Father call.
We know Thee not,—but know and feel Thou art!
Our eye can see Thee not; but, Lord! our heart
Is touched as with Thy spirit, and even now
I feel Thee,—feel Thee in this holy glow.
A peace which none but Thou could'st give inspires
My bosom; heavenly aspiration fires
My towering thoughts. O God! what breath but Thine
Could kindle aspirations so divine!
Benignant condescension! that Thy ray
Should send its brightness through a clod of clay.
And raise to Thy abode,—to Heaven,—to Thee,—
The poor, weak children of mortality!
Thus privileged, let my spirit-rousing thought,
Which vainly seeks to praise Thee as it ought,
Pour forth its humble strains. Eternal Lord!
Thy majesty might crush the embryo word
With its gigantic presence; but Thy love
Gives it a voice, and wafts its tones above.
Grant me, Eternal One! Thy light to cheer.
Thy hand to guide me, while I journey here:
Thy grace to help, Thy peace my soul to fill,
And sorrow's storm may thunder if it will.
I am supported by Thy holy arm,—
The cloud may burst,—but O. it cannot harm.
I say not, "Shield me, Father, from distress,"
But, "Wake my heart to truth and holiness."
I ask not that my earthly course may run
Cloudless, but, humbly, "Let Thy will be done."
The peace the world can give not nor destroy,
The love which is the greatest, and the joy
That's given to angels,—to perceive and own
That all Thy will is light and truth alone,
And bliss-producing;—these, and such as these,
Be mine; the vain world's fleeting vanities,—
Pomps, pleasures, riches, honours, glory, pride,
(Idols by man's perverseness deified,)

I envy not.—Do Thou my steps controul,—
Erect devotion's temple in my soul:
And there, my God! my King! unrivall'd sway:
So let existence, like a Sabbath day,
Glide softly by; and let that temple be
A shrine devoted all to truth and Thee.

PRAYER.

OUR Father which art in heaven! Once more Thou hast blessed me to see the light of a Sabbath morning. One more week of toil, of strife, of joy, or of anxiety,—one more week given for holy discipline,—has closed upon me; and Thou hast awakened me from sleep, with my powers renewed, and Thy mercies repeated unto me. Blessed be Thy name for this peaceful and holy change from accustomed duties; and for the opportunities I may have, this day, of studying Thy word, of searching into Thy dealings, and of doing Thy will. How rich was Thy love in sending Thy Son Jesus, that all, that even I, might be saved! Truly, O Father, I have been dead in trespasses and sins. I cannot look back even on the past day and week without feeling how much has been wrong within me: and when I call to mind the length of time that I knew not Thee, and cared not for Thee, my heart is bowed down with sorrow. But as Thou didst raise Jesus from the dead by Thy mighty power; even so may I also walk in newness of life. May this Sabbath be to me

a day of rest from fierce temptations; a day of growth in the knowledge of Thee, a day of active zeal in Thy service. Bless to me all its scenes and duties; bless the efforts of all who teach Thy word, and do the deeds of loving faith; and draw us all closer together in the bonds of pure affection. May this day mark within me a stage of progress in the christian life; a stage of advancement in qualification for the Christian's heaven. Grant this, and whatever else Thou seest needful for me, for all dear to me, and for Thy whole church, through our ever blessed Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Amen.



SUNDAY EVENING.

Luke xxiv., 36.—Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, "Peace be unto you."

PES! there is, indeed, peace, when our Saviour is with us,—when he awakens in our souls a sense of the presence of our Heavenly Father!

But without him can there be peace? Even if the stores of mind open to the fascinated understanding treasures unbounded, and excite the imagination to its loftiest flights, can there be peace in the soul, if God is not there,—if the spirit of our Saviour is not with us? And can the most exquisite beauty and tranquillity of nature breathe peace into that soul which has excluded from itself, by sin, the peace of God?

Yet, if Jesus is with us, his presence *alone* gives peace. It bids us hope to be one with him, as he is with the Father; it warns us to drive from the temple of our hearts all impure things, which may interfere with the worship of Him who is a Spirit; when weary and heavy laden with the weight of sin,—the burden of the flesh,—it teacheth us how to call upon Him who rejecteth not the prayer of the penitent, and will save unto the uttermost, those that come unto Him with true purpose of heart; it shows

us how one, who was like unto us in all things, save without sin, overcame the world, by living after the power of an endless life; it places before our eyes the brightness of the Father's glory,—a glory in which even *we* may be sharers.

And this heavenly being calls us his *Brethren*. We know that he was made like unto us in trials, temptations, and sorrows; we trust that we may, like him, be made perfect through suffering. We pray that he may be with us to the end of our mortal lives; and that we may begin an immortal one with him in the Heavenly Mansion, in the presence of his Father and our Father, of his God and our God.

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On the first christian Sabbath eve,  
When his disciples met,  
O'er his lost fellowship to grieve,  
Nor knew the Scriptures yet:

Lo! in their midst a form was seen,  
The form in which he died,  
Their Master's marred and wounded mien,  
His hands, his feet, his side.

Then were they glad their Lord to know,  
And hailed him, yet with fear:  
Jesus! again thy presence show!  
Meet thy disciples here:

Be in our midst!—let faith rejoice  
Our risen Lord to view,  
And make our spirits hear thy voice  
Say,—“Peace be unto you!”

And while with thee, in social hours,  
We commune through thy word,  
May our hearts burn, and all our powers  
Confess,—“It is the Lord!”

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## P R A Y E R.

OUR Father! Thou art the author of peace, and lover of concord. In knowledge of Thee standeth our eternal life. Thy service is perfect freedom. Thine be the praise for the mercies of this peaceful day. Thine be the praise, if Jesus has been in the midst of us, when we have been gathered together in Thy name. And in Thy name I would close the Sabbath. How sweet it is to lie down to rest, and to think that Thy watchful love attends us! How soothing is the thought that nothing can come to us without Thy appointment! Thou hast given me a day of holy thoughts and purposes: now give me, if it please Thee, a week of peaceful and steady labour; and fit me for it with refreshing slumber. Thou hast this day given me oil to feed my lamp: may I keep it burning brightly, with humble watchfulness. If I have been inattentive or careless this day; if I have not made the most of its blessed hours; lead me to a godly sorrow, and pardon me through Thy forgiving love in Christ. If its hours have been spent in holy communion and holy service, fix in my heart the movings of Thy spirit; so that no curtain of darkness may ever fall upon my soul. And when the resting days and the working days of earth are over, may I keep a perpetual Sabbath, with all I love, in the heaven of purity and peace and joy. I ask it through our beloved Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

## MONDAY MORNING.

Psalm xix., 2.—Day unto day uttereth speech.

**W**ITH the eye and affections of one who not only knows but feels that a God of love and wisdom is the Creator of all, what beauty and order do we not everywhere behold! How much do we not see to cherish the sentiment, that He is in all and over all, and to call for the offering of praise and prayer?

Does winter hold its triumphant reign, freezing the air, binding in its chains the springs and rivers, spreading its snows, staying the current of vegetable life, and compelling all that breathe to seek for shelter from its influence! "Summer and winter, fire and hail, snow and vapour, and stormy winds fulfil Thy word." Do we see the animals at the stream quenching their thirst, or enjoying the abundant provision which is made for their support? "They are Thy care, O God, and their sustenance is from Thy liberal hand." Does the sun rise to enlighten and warm the earth, to give a season for labour, to gladden all that live by his cheering influences, and to give a new spring to the vegetable creation? Do the clouds refresh the ground with their shade, and enrich

it with their showers? Do the moon and stars give a glory to the night, even greater than we see in the bright light of day? Does the return of darkness bring with it a time of rest, not less necessary than food for ourselves, and for all the creatures about us? "Thine, Father, are the darkness and the light, the sun and the stars, the clouds and the rain." Yes, every drop in the vast ocean; every particle of this globe on which we live; every creature, and every thing we behold, is God's; for He made them, and by Him they are every moment preserved.

Do we see evidences of wisdom in the law and courses of nature? "Thine is the work, O infinitely wise and eternal Mind!" Are we astonished at the displays of power which we behold? "Thy power, O God, like Thy wisdom, is infinite." Do we everywhere behold a parental providence? "It is Thy goodness, O my Father; and I will bless Thee for Thy bounty to them that cannot thank Thee."

Thus does every thing around us, the great and the minute, the wild and the cultivated, the delightful and the terrific, preach to us of God, and touch a string in the pious heart, which vibrates devotion. God is so associated with all these objects in the mind of a pious man, that wherever he may be, and whatever his employment, the sight of them recalls the thought of God; and with the thought, a correspondent emotion and affection, which is, to Him who sees the heart, far more acceptable than the most pompous and costly offering.

Go when the morning shineth,  
Go when the moon is bright,  
Go when the day declineth,  
Go in the hush of night;  
Go with pure mind and feeling,  
Fling earthly thoughts away,  
And, in thy chamber kneeling,  
Do thou in secret pray.

Remember all who love thee,  
All who are loved by thee;  
Pray, too, for those that hate thee,  
If any such there be;  
Then for thyself in weakness,  
A blessing humbly claim,  
And link with each petition  
The great Redeemer's name.

Or, if 'tis e'er denied thee  
In solitude to pray;  
Should holy thoughts come o'er thee  
When friends are on thy way;  
E'en then the silent breathing  
Of thy spirit raised above,  
Will reach *His* throne of glory,  
Who is mercy, truth, and love.

Oh! not a joy or blessing  
With this can we compare,—  
The power that He hath given us  
To pour our souls in prayer!  
Whene'er thou pin'st in sadness,  
Before His footstool fall,  
Remember in thy gladness,  
His grace who gave them all.



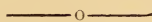
## PRAYER.

I WILL remember, O Father, Thy tender mercies and Thy loving kindnesses, for they have been ever of old. They are renewed every morning: they are increased continually. I joyfully bless Thee for all the tokens of Thy love. I thank Thee for my renewed power to labour; and for the glory thou hast offered to me, of being a fellow-worker with Thee through the Lord Jesus. May I then do nothing but Thy work. However lowly my service, may I render it as to Thee, and not to men. May I minister to the wants of others in every form of love; and bear their burdens in every form of patience. May the remembrance of the past Sabbath hallow the scenes of the week, and help in overcoming its temptations. To Thee I would consecrate myself anew, now that it is opening on me. May its days be spent in cheerful toil, and its times of repose be hallowed by the consciousness of Thy loving presence. May my conversation be such as to adorn my Christian profession. May I be the means of edifying those with whom I meet. Help me, blessed Father, to show a firm integrity, a simple truthfulness, a holy purity, and an unwavering faith. May a sense of Thy extreme and unmerited goodness be a constant motive to me in my struggles. May Thy spirit dwell within me, and inspire me with strength and love and

wisdom. Help all those who are striving after holiness; and be an especial support to such as are tempted and distressed. And when, by Thy grace, I have done and borne Thy will on earth, take me to my Home, O Father, and unite me again to those most dear ones, whose love Thou hast here given as my greatest treasure. And Thine be the fulness of our praise, through Jesus, our holy Mediator. Amen.



## MONDAY EVENING.



Job xxxv., 10.— God, my Maker, who giveth songs  
in the night.

**H**ES! the declaration is as true as it is beautiful,  
that God, our Maker, giveth songs in the night.  
In the wakeful and weary hours, when no eye can  
witness the strife within, when no human voice can  
speak a word to steady the spirit in its wanderings  
and imaginings, He can impart peace and strength  
to His children, and enable them to rejoice even in tribu-  
lation. With *Him* the night shineth as the day; and in  
both seasons He is equally present to aid and comfort.  
And happy are they who, in their night-musings, are  
thus favoured. No instrument of human melody is half  
so soothing, or can so powerfully move the heart-strings  
and wake the notes of praise. We find many interesting  
and striking examples in Scripture, of the enjoyment of  
these songs in the night. Jacob was thus favoured; and  
was enabled, as he raised his head from the stony pillow on  
which he slept, to say, "this is none other than the house  
of God, and the gate of Heaven." David was similarly  
privileged. "I remember Thee," he observes, addressing  
the Almighty, "upon my bed, and thought of Thee when  
I was waking!" "O my God," he again exclaims "my

soul is cast down within me; therefore will I remember Thee; deep calleth unto deep at the voice of Thy water-spouts; all Thy waves and billows are gone over me. Yet the Lord will command His loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the *night* His *song* shall be with me."

Our blessed Lord himself was no stranger to these songs in the night, which often refreshed and comforted him. In the night of Gethsemane's agony he was thus favoured; and amidst his unparalleled sorrow, celestial consolation was vouchsafed, and an angel strengthened him. We read, too, of Paul and Silas, that when they were thrust into the inner prison at Philippi, for their boldness in preaching the Gospel, at midnight, strong in the blessed supports of their faith, they made their dungeon resound with the praises of God, and were compassed about with songs of joy and deliverance.

Upon *our* night watchings also is the wakeful eye of Omniscience. We may thus commune with the Deity, and find comfort in the recollection that we are covered with the wing of His providence; and that He is present as our upholder and guardian. "God our Maker, giveth songs in the night."

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NIGHT is the time for rest:

How sweet, when labours close,
To gather round an aching breast
The curtains of repose;
Stretch the tired limbs, and lay the head
Upon our own delightful bed!

Night is the time for dreams;
The gay romance of life;
The truth that is, and truth that seems,
Mix in fantastic strife;
Ah! visions less beguiling far
Than waking dreams of daylight are.

Night is the time for toil;
To plough the classic field,
Intent to find the buried spoil
Its wealthy furrows yield;
Till all is ours that sages taught,
That poets sang, and heroes wrought.

Night is the time to weep;
To wet with unseen tears
Those graves of memory, where sleep
The joys of other years;
Hopes that were angels at their birth.
But died when young, like things of earth.

Night is the time to watch
O'er ocean's dark expanse,
To hail the Pleiades, or catch
The full moon's earliest glance,
That brings into the home-sick mind
All we have loved and left behind.

Night is the time for care;
Brooding o'er hours misspent,
To see the spectre of despair
Come to our lonely tent,
Like Brutus, 'midst his slumbering host,
Summoned to die by Cæsar's ghost.

Night is the time to think;
When, from the eye, the soul

Takes flight, and, on the utmost brink
Of yonder starry pole,
Discerns beyond the abyss of night,
The dawn of uncreated light.

Night is the time to pray;
Our Saviour oft withdrew
To desert mountains far away;
So will his followers do,—
Steal from the throng to haunts untrod,
And commune there alone with God.

Night is the time for death:
When all around is peace,
Calmly to yield the parting breath,
From sin and suffering cease,
Think of Heaven's bliss, and give the sign
To parting friends:—such death be mine!

PRAYER.

THOU, O our Heavenly Father, art drawing the veil of darkness over whatever is beautiful in Thy works, as well as over whatever is corrupt in the workings of human passions. If I am fatigued with the day's labour, now Thou invitest me to repose. If I have been harassed with the day's tumult, now Thou givest me peace. If the business of the world has tempted me to forget Thee, now Thy still small voice speaks within me; and I call to mind that Thou hast not forgotten me one moment of this day,

but hast been guarding me continually from dangers seen and unseen. O Father! pity my weakness, and pardon my transgressions. In my feebleness, be Thou my strength. I am about to lay myself down on the helpless bed of slumber; but Thou art the source of every help. If it please Thee, refresh my body and my mind with rest. If I dream, may no unholy imagination defile my soul. If I be watchful, let my thoughts be of Thy love. When all is hushed around me, may I search and try my ways. When the mortal senses are inactive, may my spirit more clearly discern Thy blessed presence; and thus be drawn closer to Thee, the Home of my affections and hopes. Into Thy hands I commit myself, and all I love; through Jesus Christ my Redeemer. Amen.



TUESDAY MORNING.

—o—

Genesis xxii. 14.—In the mountain Jehovah will provide.

(SO TRANSLATED IN WELDELOVED'S BIBLE.)

IT is hardly possible to conceive of a trial more severe than that by which the Divine Being proved his servant Abraham's faith, and closed that peculiar course of discipline by which he had so long been exercised. Yet, strong in faith, he hesitated not to obey the severe injunction, "Take thy son, thy only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and go unto the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains, of which I will tell thee." The event justified and rewarded his faith. In the mountain Jehovah did provide.

These things have been treasured up, and handed down to us through the lapse of ages, for our example and encouragement. Let us learn hence the duty and wisdom of obedience to the will of God, into whatever circumstances of apparent danger or of real distress it may lead us. It will require, no doubt, much care and caution to determine, in every instance, what the will of God respecting us may be, and to avoid the illusions of fancy or enthusiasm; but having, with becoming care and diligence, sought to

know what God requires of us, whatever difficulties may oppose, whatever alarm may threaten, it will be incumbent on us to persevere in the way of duty opened by his providence before us; assured that His power will in the end reward our exertions, and recompense the temporary losses we may sustain. Abraham believed in God; and through a dark and perplexing scene, implicitly followed the command of God. Had he any cause to repent? Did He who imposed the trial fail to support and reward him? Many since his days have, in the severest tribulation, adhered to the path of duty. We revere their piety; we admire their fortitude; we rejoice with them in their consolations and their reward. Let us go and do likewise. "In the mountain Jehovah will provide." He will not leave nor forsake us; our strength shall be equal to our day; light shall spring up out of darkness; and, in God's own time, every trouble and perplexity shall be removed, and our recompense shall be exceedingly great and glorious.

ABRAHAM heard: believing God,
Duty's onward path he trod;
Trusting Him whose word could bless,
Won the meed of righteousness.

Christian pilgrim, Zionward,
True disciple of thy Lord!
May his spirit to thy heart
Kindred faithfulness impart.

Thou may'st hear a voice within;
Let that voice attention win;

Doubt not, fear not, trust its word;
Follow on to know the Lord.

At His bidding, sacrifice
More than country's, kindred's ties;
These may still be spared to thee,—
Let thy heart thy Master's be.

Daily, hourly, labour there;
Waiting, watching, unto prayer;
Wait to know thy Master's will:
Watch and pray, and do it still.

Faithful to the end endure;
Then thy calling shall be sure;
Then, whene'er thy Lord shall come,
Death shall only lead thee home!

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY Father, who causest the sun to rise and shine, and makest the day, I bless Thee for preserving me in peace and safety during the defenceless hours of sleep; keeping me living in the land of the living; and once more awakening my powers of body and of mind for my various duties. Accept, I beseech thee, my morning incense of praise, and grant that, under a sense of Thy Fatherly goodness, I may this day render willing obedience to all Thy known commandments. Give me strength equal to my day. Save me from falling into sin and running

into danger. Enable me to keep in innocence, and may integrity preserve me. And during this day, and every day of my life, may I have a conscience void of offence towards Thee and towards man. May Thy blessing rest upon this household. May we be faithful and true, affectionate and kind, one to another, bearing one another's burdens, and so fulfilling the Saviour's law of love. Overlook our unworthiness, O Father; forgive the sins into which any of us may have fallen. Prepare us for all the measures of Thy wise providence. May we not desire prosperity unduly, nor fear adversity beyond measure: but in all seasons and all changes, may we rely upon Thy grace and mercy, through faith in Jesus Christ Amen.



TUESDAY EVENING.

—o—

Psalm cxiii., 7.—And He led them forth by the right way.

MY Father! may I ever humbly follow in Thy way; may I ever trust, with the full assurance of faith, that it *does* lead to Thy heavenly kingdom.

It is often very narrow and perplexed, and I cannot see where it is leading me; broad and easy paths turn out from it, and many tempt me to walk in them; yet, though the guiding light of Thy holy word may be half obscured by the mists of the valley, if I fix my eye steadily upon it, it will become brighter and brighter: I shall see my way clearly in this seemingly intricate road, and even discern at the end of it the entrance to Thy heavenly mansion.

Sometimes, O my Father! Thou dost take from us all our props and supports on the way; we say in our hearts that there is none to help us. While we travelled happily together, we forgot that we were only strangers and pilgrims; now Thou takest the beloved ones from us, that we may fly to Thee only for help; we cry unto Thee from the depth of our sorrow, and Thou dost come

Thyself with Thy beloved Son to make Thy abode with us. We thought that we should have fainted by the way, yet now we are even stronger than before. We go on our way rejoicing, and see that Thou didst lead us aright.

But yet again, O my Father! when I have been striving to find out Thy way, and to walk in it aright, I am sometimes suddenly plunged into deep and stagnant marshes, from which I seem unable to extricate myself; or a fierce whirlwind is around me,—I am tossed to and fro,—my senses are confused, and I know not whither to go; or a thick gloom is on my soul; the light that is in me is darkness; I cry aloud, “Help, Lord, or I perish;” yet the whirlwind ceaseth not,—the darkness becometh still more fearful. O Father! though I see Thee not in the storm of fearful passions, though I perceive not Thy hand guiding me in the thick darkness of my own soul, the storm cometh from Thee, and it is Thou who permittest the gloom to fall on me, that I may afterwards listen with more humble trust to the still small voice of Thy love,—that I may fix a more steady gaze on Thy own pure light.

My Father! may I ever have this firm confidence, that Thou dost lead me by the *right* way! May nothing separate me from the love of Thee! Then, whatever troubles encompass me from without or from within, my heart shall not fail, for it shall rest on the Rock of Ages.

I ASKED the Lord that I might grow
In faith and love, and every grace;
Might more of His salvation know,
And seek more earnestly His face.

'Twas He who taught me thus to pray,
And He, I trust, hath answered prayer;
But it has been in such a way
As almost drove me to despair

I thought that in some favoured hour,
At once He'd answer my request,
And, by His love's constraining power,
Subdue my soul and give me rest.

Instead of this, He made me feel
The hidden evils of my heart;
And made the angry powers of hell
Assault my soul from every part.

Nay, more: with His own hand He seemed
Intent to aggravate my woe;
Crossed all the fair designs I schemed;
Blasted my gourds, and laid me low.

"Lord! what is this?" I trembling cried;
"Wilt Thou pursue Thy worm to death?"
"'Tis in this way," the Lord replied,
"I answer prayers for grace and faith.

"These inward trials I employ,
From self, from pride to set thee free;
And break thy schemes of earthly joy,
That thou may'st find thy all in Me."

P R A Y E R.

O MY Father! lead me on, lead me ever where Thou wouldst have me to go! Lead me where Thou wilt, for I know that Thy ways—thine only—can lead to heaven! O Father! in my blindness, and my ignorance, and my self-will, I often seek to go my own way, and I am hindered, and then I fret; open my eyes, I pray Thee, O Father! that I may see that it is Thy hand which is restraining me in mercy, to bring me into the right way again; and let me lovingly kiss that hand. Or, when I have been following Thy guiding pillar, I have suddenly beheld a stormy sea of troubles before me, and fierce enemies behind armed for battle; my faith has well-nigh fainted, and I have cried “Who shall deliver me?” O God! Thine arm is never shortened that it cannot save; let me still go on fearing nothing, for Thou can’st lead me safely through the roaring waves, my weakness shall be made strong in Thee! And when I am hungering for the bread of life, O give Thou it me, Thou only can’st, from heaven Thy dwelling place; when my soul is thirsting for the waters of life, O strike Thou the barren rock, and let the full stream of Thy grace be ever with me as I wander through the wilderness. Then shall it blossom with divine beauty,—then, with my soul subdued by

Thy love, and led onwards by Thee as a little child by its father, I shall travel joyfully onwards, until from Pisgah I behold that long promised land, and thence Thou takest me to Thyself, and to the loved ones who are gone before to the mansions which the Saviour has prepared for us.

Thou hearest us always, O Father! may I be ever Thine. Amen.



WEDNESDAY MORNING.

Matt. v., 7.—Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

O not all mourn in this world of sin and misery? The proud do not mourn, for they set self above sorrow for sin, or afflictions from without. The selfish do not mourn, for they only fret at what vexes or wounds their own narrow being.

But there are many that mourn—many that sorrow after a godly sort. There are those that humbly mourn under the chastening hand of a Father, who afflicteth not willingly His children;—they shall be comforted. Their hearts will be weaned from a changing world, and indissolubly bound to that which changeth not; for where our treasure is, there will our hearts be also. And from those blissful abodes, rays will shine on their hearts; a purer flame will be kindled within them; they will see their Father's love in all; the world around will glow with new beauty; and they will be comforted;—*their* souls are blessed.

Others there are that mourn over evils caused by the sinfulness of man; they will be led by them to purify themselves from all pollutions of the flesh, that they may

help their brethren onward; and, turning their highest powers to this great object, they will, by degrees, see seeming evil still producing good in the hands of an infinitely wise and benevolent Being, and will justify the ways of God to men; they will at last learn, in some measure, to see everything as God sees it; they will perceive that all is very good;—they will be comforted.

But others mourn in greater depths of sorrow. They have within them the divine life; yet they feel that it is no longer pure and without spot before God; they sin so often, and after so many warnings, so many resolutions, that they hardly venture to believe that the spirit is truly willing. Yet this sorrow, almost overwhelming as it sometimes is, may subdue the proud spirit;—it may lead us to take the yoke of Christ upon us, and then He will give us rest; it may help us to purify our souls by doing the will of God. Will not sorrow then be blest, however grievous it may have been? Shall we not own the gracious hand which strikes that it may heal,—which afflicts that we may be comforted?

COME, ye who mourn, and dry your tears,
And let your sorrows cease;
For lo! the Son of Man appears,
To calm the sufferer's anxious fears,
And soothe his soul to peace.

Come, ye who mourn a sinful choice,
Come and efface the stain;
For lo! the blest Redeemer's voice
Bids every contrite heart rejoice,
And whispers peace again.

Come, ye who mourn with woes opprest,
And cast your cares behind ;
Come, lean upon your Saviour's breast,
And hush the anxious soul to rest,
And calm the troubled mind.

Come, ye who weep departed friends,
Come, all to sorrow driven ;
Lo ! o'er the grave hope's rainbow bends,
Whose beauty from the earth extends,
And reaches up to heaven.

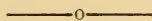
PRAYER.

THOU, O Father, despisest not the sighings of a contrite spirit. Thou knowest what is in my heart, and where my chief desires and affections are centered. O that they may ever be, where in my best moments I wish them to be ! Weaken within me those earth-born emotions that deaden the holier feelings of my soul. When tempted with evil thoughts and wrong passions, may I have strength to cast them out, resolutely directing my mind to the blessed truths of the Gospel. May I look upon each hour as a special gift from Thee, and employ it in the duty that Thou didst design for it. May each pleasure and mercy Thou sendest, be a new tie of gratitude to bind my heart to Thee. May I find that labour *for* Thee is rest *in* Thee. May trials *from* Thee become helpers

to Thee. If gloom should be my portion, and the work of my duty should be hard ; if my affections should go forth, and meet no return ; if the objects of my care should fail me, and disappointment and anxiety becloud my path ; even then, blessed Father, may my faith in Thee be strong, yea stronger. Then may I find myself nearer to Thee ; happy in Thy favour ; and full of joy because I am counted worthy to share in our Saviour's sufferings. And when the work of faith is over, may the fulness of love be the portion of my soul, in the home of the Father and the Son. Amen.



WEDNESDAY EVENING.



John xvi., 7.—It is expedient for you that I go away.

IT was for many reasons best for the disciples that their Lord should be removed from them; but never was his image to be erased from their hearts. The memory of the just is blessed, the righteous shall be held in everlasting remembrance.

He only went away to be with them more completely. When he was personally present he was often misunderstood, and his lessons failed, in many instances, of their due influence. When he was gone, they lived the last year over again. His words now were received into good ground; those worldly desires which choked the good seed were torn away; and abundant fruit showed the heavenly nature of the plant and the goodness of the soil. It was itself a mournful event that he should depart from them, but he did not leave them comfortless; they were sorrowful, but their sorrow was turned into joy; they beheld him no more, but the holy spirit, which the Father sent in his name, taught them all things, and brought to their recollection whatever he had said unto them. *Once Jesus*

abode *with* them, *now* he abode *in* them ; once his *form* cheered their eyes, now his *presence* gladdened their hearts. It was no less true than wonderful, that with the departed they could enjoy a closer communion than with those who were present with them. Instead of the friendship of dying men, it was now the fellowship of immortal spirits.

THE saints on earth and those above
But one communion make ;
Joined to their Lord in bonds of love,
All of his grace partake.

One family. we dwell in him,
One church. above, beneath ;
Though now divided by the stream,—
The narrow stream of death.

One army of the living God,
To His command we bow ;
Part of the host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now.

Lo ! thousands to their endless home
Are swiftly borne away ;
And we are to the margin come,
And soon must launch as they.

O God ! be Thou our constant guide :
Then, when Thy word is given,
Shall death's cold flood its waves divide,
And land us safe in heaven.

PRAYER.

EVER blessed Father! While, in my ignorance and frailty, I think that good which is not good; while I sometimes implore a curse instead of a blessing; Thou knowest what is really for my highest good, and in Thy love Thou sendest me Thy chastenings. Often have my prayers been answered in a way that I expected not; but always, I am humbly confident, Thou dost answer, in Thine own good time, and in Thine own most excellent way, every prayer that is offered in the spirit of the Saviour's trust and obedience. I rejoice that, while everything on earth fades away; while one by one, those ties are broken which bind me to this present world; while all is to me uncertain, and I know not even what a day may bring forth; I am enabled to say that there is One whose mercy never changeth. Hallelujah, for the Father omnipotent reigneth! Oh, may my heart be open, to perceive the end of Thy dealings towards me. Make me more holy, more heavenly. May my life be hid with Christ in Thee. May I lay my treasures in the mansions above. May I be ever watchful and humble, that I may receive the teachings of Thy Spirit, and live closely with Thee. And when thou takest me from my earthly home, may I find an eternal home in the enjoyment of Thy love, with all the holy ones whom the Saviour has led to Thee. Accept me, I pray Thee, blessed Father, through Thy redeeming mercy in Christ Jesus. Amen.

THURSDAY MORNING.

Psalm xlii., 11.—Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God.

WHY art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?" Does thy dejection spring from the consciousness of great imperfection in thy religious character; of wrong habits not yet subdued; of wrong dispositions too often exercised; of "talents wasted, time misspent?" Dost thou feel apprehensive lest thou shouldst fail of reaching the promised inheritance? Dost thou lament thy limited usefulness, thy inability to accomplish the purposes which thy benevolence prompts thee to form? Dost thou mourn for good resolutions which have vanished like the morning cloud or the early dew? Dost thou reflect with distress on negligence in the work assigned thee; or impatience under the afflictions with which thy Father has visited thee; or the little progress which thou hast made in subjecting thy desires and dispositions to the law of God? Dost thou fear lest thy fortitude should be unable to resist the temptations and the difficulties which surround thee; or lest thy principles should prove too weak to withstand the constant influence of

present interests and cares and pleasures, which tend to check or stop thee on thy progress heavenward? Certainly thou hast room for caution, but not for despair. Blessed are they who mourn with godly sorrow, for they shall be comforted. Do not forget that thou art in the hands of a wise and gracious Parent, who knoweth our frame, who remembereth that we are but dust; that as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. Our unallowed defects and imperfections should indeed render us watchful and humble; but they should not exclude the cheering rays of divine mercy. The promises of the gospel, while they afford no hope to the impenitent and disobedient, give the best consolation to the weary and heavy laden. I cannot doubt the mercy of God, for it rests on His own gracious declaration. His sacrifices are a broken spirit; and most assuredly a broken and a contrite heart He will not despise. Let me then here, in the hour of holy retirement, lay open my heart, with all its wants and weaknesses, before Him who can read the language of the silent tear; who needs not the aid of words to understand my secret aspirations after obedience to His will,—after the spirit of Him who hath trodden before us in the path of holy obedience. He, who in ways, which, perhaps, we cannot fully understand, communicates His gracious aid to those who humbly and steadily seek His favour, will answer my habitual supplications with strength in temptation, and with guidance in moral perplexities, such as they cannot know, who, through high ideas of their own firmness and strength of principle, restrain prayer before God, and lean not on the rock of their salvation. Why, then, art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?

Hope thou in God; the God of grace and of all consolation; the Almighty Guardian of those who love and fear Him; the gracious Being who will make it well with them here and well with them for ever. Let me seek His favour and His gracious succour with full purpose of heart. Let me not sink under difficulties, but lean on His powerful arm. Let me be sober, and watch unto prayer; and thus my end will be full of peace and hope.

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OH! why cast down, my soul?

Oh! why despair?

Why murmur at thy lot

Of grief and care;

Through every scene of pain,

Let not thy heart complain,

For peace will yet remain

If God be there.

The glorious morning's light

Dawns bright and fair;

But soon the heavens grow black,

The lightnings glare.

Yet the red lightning's way,

And the sun's cheering ray,

The self-same love display,

For God is there.

Then welcome, O my soul!

The will divine;

And to Almighty love

Thyself resign.

Since love divine appears

To wipe away my tears,

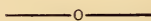
And banish all my fears,

His will be mine!

## P R A Y E R.

MY Father! If weeping endureth for the night, Thou sendest joy with the morning. How can I resist the tokens of Thy love? My heart must indeed be dead, if I can see thy hand creating all things new, and spreading a fresh veil of beauty over thy works, and doubt of Thy loving kindness unto me. I will take the cup of salvation, which Thy Son holds out to me, and call upon Thy name. And I ask not, Father, what shall be within that cup. If it be filled with disappointment or anxiety or pain or privation, still thou hast prepared my lot, and I would meet it trustfully. Even as the Saviour prayed unto Thee, "Thy will be done." Oh give me strength to bear it and to do it. Suffer me not to remain under the bondage of fear; but give unto me the healthful spirit of Thy grace,—the spirit of love, of joy, and of a sound mind. If I sorrow, let it be after that godly sort, which shall draw my soul nearer to him who, for my sake, was acquainted with grief. If I am glad, may my happy powers find their appointed work in cheerful service, bearing the burdens of the heavy laden, and cheering the dark lot of the lonely. Father, if Thou givest me the cup of trial, give me also the bread of life. May the heavenly words of Thy truth be my portion this day. Suffer not any unworthy motive to influence my heart. May the suggestions of self-love, and the cravings of the lower appetites, and all temptations from without, as well as the spirit of distrust within, be overcome by faith in Thy promises; and may my soul be full of light in Thy love, for evermore. Grant it to me and all dear to me through Thine infinite mercy in Christ Jesus, our blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.

## THURSDAY EVENING.



Isaiah xxvi., 3.—Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee.

 HIS peace is the peace of God which passeth all understanding, which the Saviour has promised to bestow on those who love him;—this is calm and bright in the midst of storms and darkness;—the world knoweth it not, and can neither give it, nor take it away.

It is promised to him who stayeth his soul on the Rock of Ages; who seeketh no help elsewhere; who loveth nothing in comparison with Him who is perfect love.

Why doth the prophet give this sure word of comfort to him that stayeth his mind on God? Because he *trusteth*. In whom should we trust, but in Him from whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things? When the weak mortal *clings with confidence* to the Omnipotent Immortal, what *can* he fear? What *ought* to disturb his trust?

And how often, instead of thus yielding ourselves to God, and partaking of His holy spirit, and rejoicing in all that He doth, because He doeth it, and it must therefore be very good; how often do we fret ourselves that our way hath not been God's way, and that our fond and empty visions have vanished into air!—*then* we have no peace! How often when we have wandered from God, instead of staying our souls on Him who can bring us back, do we seek after false guides, or ask of our own selves the way to peace! How often, when sorrows come upon us, do we forget from whom they come, and lose the peace of God, because we have not trusted in Him?

O may we ever strive to unite our wills with God's and then nothing can happen to harass our souls; may we trust in him with perfect faith, and then He will give us perfect peace.

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THERE is a calm the poor in spirit know,  
That softens sorrow, and that lightens woe;  
There is a peace that dwells within the breast,  
When all without is stormy and distrest;  
There is a light that gilds the darkest hour,  
When dangers threaten, and when troubles lour:  
That calm to faith and hope and love is given;  
That peace remains when all beside is riven;  
That light shines down to man direct from heaven.



## P R A Y E R.

FATHER ! how sweet it is to lie down in peace, and know that Thou guardest our slumbers. I would not fear the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor the terrors of devouring flames, nor the attacks of lawless men. As Thou wast with Jesus on the mountain, so be with me. May my wakeful thoughts, and even the visions of my sleep, be Thine. But, Father, I would not trust in Thee only when my own powers are inactive. Lead me to stay on Thy supports, when they of this world are trusting to themselves. In the activity of life, and in the contention of my daily labour, may I be working for Thee, and find that Thou blessest my toil. While the ungodly are distracted with anxieties, may I trust in Thy promises of food and raiment to such as seek first the heavenly kingdom. May I make any sacrifices that the spirit of Thy word enjoins, and then calmly wait on Thee. When sudden calamities terrify those who live without Thy law, may I remember that nothing is sudden unto Thee, and that time and chance are not known in Thy presence. May I faithfully apply the means of holiness and the means of usefulness Thou hast granted unto me ; and, in patient hope, leave the result with Thee. May it ever be the joy of my life to be about my Father's business. Guide me by Thy Holy Spirit. Make the way of duty plain unto me, and may I quietly



wait for the movings of Thy grace,—content, O Father, with Thy will, and quiet as a child. Watch over all those that are dear unto me. Calm the turbulence of evil passions, and lay every anxiety to rest in Thy love. And when earthly toil is over, and we need no longer the refreshment of bodily repose, may we enter into the rest of perfect trust, and the peace of endless love, which passeth all present understanding. I ask it through our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Amen.



## FRIDAY MORNING.

—o—

Matthew vi., 23.—If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

HE light that is in us? Have we seen that light? Have our souls dwelt in it? Then have we known, assuredly, that it is light from heaven,—a ray from the Father of light! And when we have had this light in us, has there ever been darkness that could be felt around us? But when that has been extinguished,—when the light that is in us has been darkness,—how great has been that darkness! He only can tell who has endured it, and has known, from dreadful experience, that it is a gloom that cannot be lightened by all the glories of the external world.

The Saviour has come to kindle the heavenly flame that is smouldering in our souls, stifled by unholy desires; to show us the way to the Father of lights, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. Let me listen to his voice! “If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light.” If it is directed with a steady, single aim to God, then our whole soul will be purified, all its powers and aspirations will be brought into a perfect

and harmonious action; it will *see*, because God's light will shine on everything around it; it will dwell in light; the whole body will be full of light, because God's light will be in it.

But we cannot enjoy this blessedness by mere aspirations and longings after it. We must devote our powers and active exertions, and even our hours of relaxation and enjoyment, to the service of our great Master. He will have no divided service. No one can serve two masters, and any other would separate us from Him.

Has *my* soul chosen this good part? Do I follow Jehovah, my God, in *all*? Have I not many hours of darkness, and few of light? Let me not deceive myself. I cannot have the blessedness of God's light while I cling to my own darkness, or faint glimmering of earthly light. Let me, then, earnestly seek out that which blinds me; and if my whole eye be evil let me pluck it out and cast it from me. Let me not falsely imagine that my happiness or misery depends on external circumstances. If darkness seems thick around me, assuredly my own light is darkened.

Father of light! do Thou so enlighten me that my whole body may be full of light; do Thou shine on my soul with the light of Thy countenance!

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God, my strength, to Thee I pray!
Turn not Thou thine ear away;
Gracious to my cry attend,
While the suppliant knee I bend.

Grant me, Lord, Thy peace and light,
To direct my steps aright,
To protect, in trial's hour,
From the world's ensnaring power.

Cleanse me from the guilt that lies
Wrapt within my heart's disguise;
Let me thence, by Thee renewed,
All presumptuous sin exclude.

Let my tongue, from rashness free,
Speak the words approved by Thee;
And to Thine all-searching eyes
Let my thoughts accepted rise.

Hear, and to my soul display
Mercy's all-enlivening ray;
Let it lead, in faith and love,
Onward to a home above.

P R A Y E R.

O most merciful and gracious God! Thou art the fountain of all mercy and goodness. Thou hast opened Thy hand of mercy to fill me with blessings, and with the sweet effects of Thy loving kindness. As Thou hast spread Thy hand over me for a covering, so also enlarge my heart with thankfulness, and fill my mouth with praise; that my duty and returns to Thee may be great as the grace I stand in need of. May what Thou hast sown in mercy spring up in duty. Let me walk in the light of Thy favour, and in the paths of Thy commandments; that, living here to the

glory of my Lord, I may spend eternity in giving praise to Thy exalted and ever glorious name. Guide me, O Lord, in all the varieties and changes of the world, that in all things which may happen I may preserve an evenness and a tranquillity of spirit; that my soul may be wholly resigned to Thy divine will and pleasure; never murmuring at Thy chastisements and Fatherly correction; never being high-minded or forgetful, if it please Thee to grant me prosperity. Fix my thoughts, my hopes, my desires, on eternal things. Teach me to despise the world. Enrich my understanding with an eternal treasure of Divine truths, that I may know Thy will; and give me a firm purpose, knowing, to perform it. O Lord strengthen my faith, confirm my hope, and give me a daily increase of charity; that this day and ever I may serve Thee according to all my opportunities and capacities, growing from grace to grace, in the knowledge and likeness of my beloved Saviour. Amen.



FRIDAY EVENING.

—o—

John xxi., 17.—He saith unto him the third time,
“Simon, Son of Jonas, lovest thou me?”



PETER was grieved because he said unto him the third time, “Lovest thou me!” And well he might be, for it must have reminded him of his three denials, when his Lord turned and looked on him, and he went out and wept bitterly. He who had been loudest in his protestations was the first to fall; and yet Jesus knew that he had a strength of love which would cast out his fear, and render him a brave and faithful shepherd.

We, too, have expressed our love to Christ. We should be grieved if it were questioned. We take his name upon us; we seek his spirit in our prayers; perhaps sit at his table; and yet have we, who have broken bread with him, never lifted up our heel against him, and brought his name into dishonour, by the inconsistency of our conduct? Possibly, conscience may acquit us; and yet have we not neglected and forsaken, if we have not wilfully denied, him? In the hour of

joy, have we not closed our ears to his prophesies of sorrow, saying, "These things shall not be unto us!" In distress have we not gone forth from his presence, to sorrow as those without hope? Have we watched with his brethren in their agony? Have we cheered them in the hour of their trial? Have we helped them to bear their crosses? Have we been willing to take up our own, to deny ourselves, and follow Christ, in evil report as well as in good report? Do we count all things but loss that we might win him? Do we feel as if nothing can separate us from his love, and from that of the Father, whom he came to reveal to us?

If we have been favoured with blissful communion with him; if he has revealed himself to our hearts, and we think we love him, so that we could do anything to serve him; if we feel ourselves his friends, and have been always ready to own our affection for him before those who might despise us for it, let us show it, in the way that he pointed out to Peter, by feeding his sheep; strengthening the diseased, and healing the sick; binding up that which was broken, and bringing again that which was driven away; and seeking those who were lost. We cannot love him whom we do not see, unless our hearts are warmed towards our brethren, and his. We cannot love *them* unless we lead them to those still waters, which we ourselves have found so sweet, and teach them to repose in the shade of the tree of life. The love of Christ must constrain us to live no longer to ourselves; we must "walk in love, as Christ also loved us and hath given himself for us;" we must not only be pure in heart, but must show a willingness, like his, to make a sacrifice of personal ease, and to give up

enjoyments, which to us are innocent, and to go whither we would not, that we may be the means of saving others from temptation, and delivering them from evil, and then Christ and the Father will love us, and they will come unto us, and make their abode with us.

Though sorrows rise, and dangers roll
In waves of darkness o'er my soul;
Though friends are false, and love decays,
And few and evil are my days;
Yet e'en in nature's utmost ill,
I love Thee, Lord! I love Thee still!

Though conscience, fiercest of my foes,
Swells with remembered guilt my woes;
And memory points, with busy pain,
To grace and mercy giv'n in vain;
Though every thought has pow'r to kill,
I love Thee, Lord! I love Thee still!

O by the woes Messiah bore,
And in his grief was lov'd the more;
By these, my pangs, whose healing smart
Thy grace hath planted in my heart;
I know, I feel Thy bounteous will!
Thou lov'st me. Lord! Thou lov'st me still!

P R A Y E R .

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, oh, fill me with his devotion, his love of souls, his meekness, his patient and self-denying zeal ; and give me grace that I may walk after his example in all holiness, purity and goodness. Thou seest the children of men who are yet walking in a vain show, and following evil devices ; and the many who cry, from the dark wilderness of ignorance and sin, " no man careth for our souls." May I myself be converted unto Thee, the living God, and then go forth, with an earnest and loving heart, to seek and save those that are lost. And oh, preserve me from the temptations of prosperity and of adversity ; of self-indulgence and of envy ; and grant that in the spirit of a Christlike devotedness unto Thee and to the eternal interests of the human soul, I may run and not be weary, I may walk and not faint. May the love of Christ constrain me to live unto him that died for us ; that, when I die, I may die in the Lord, and be received into the fulness of Thy love in him. Amen.



SATURDAY MORNING.

1 John iv., 20.—He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?



LOVE, in its purity, is union of soul.

The higher the qualities by which we are united to one another, the higher, the purer, the more intense, and more perfect is love.

The highest love, when unalloyed, is perfect bliss.

Our love to God must be founded on the highest qualities of our nature, as He is perfection. Love to Him is unalloyed as regards the object of it, because He is Himself unchangeably holy. It is, therefore, the highest, purest, most intense, and most constant love of which we are capable; hence union of soul with God can alone constitute perfect bliss.

The great object of man's training here is to fit him for perfect bliss,—for life, properly so called; that is, for union of spirit with Him of whose spirit he is.

To effect this, God leads him from things that are seen to things that are unseen; from the temporal, the bounded, the finite, to the eternal, the unbounded, the infinite.

The objects of all the senses are formed to excite *love*

in the soul. Of themselves *alone* they cannot raise us to the love of the spiritual, of God; but when once the love of God is brightly kindled in the soul, it derives nutriment from the seeing of the eye, from the hearing of the ear, from the things around and within us.

The apostle did not, however, advert to these incitements to the love of God, because they require a previous preparation of mind; and because, from being connected necessarily and intimately with self, none but those who have in great degree escaped from its thralldom can worthily use these things as not abusing them.

There is, then, a way provided, by which man is insensibly drawn out of himself, filled with heavenly thoughts and affections, and thus led to God.

It is provided; for the earliest traces of love are discerned in the instincts, in the nature, so to speak; they are traced down from man, among the beings lower than man, until they gradually disappear as the race becomes progressively lower; they are found in every variety of the human race, and in every stage of its existence; they appear with the earliest consciousness; they are, perhaps, never totally destroyed, even when man's vices have hideously deformed the beauty of his nature, or when the slow, but certain decay of his faculties seems to point to annihilation rather than to eternity.

This *instinctive*, animal love, *begins* to lead man from himself,—to make him unite with something out of himself,—to make him forget himself.

Nature thus calls man from himself, and towards God, by awakening in him gratitude for benefits received, by thus inspiring him with love for some other than himself: this, if *carried onward*, will lead him to the love of God.

But this love has still a reference to self, however refined it may be ; and Christ has said, "If ye love them only who love you, what thank have ye?" He told us that we are to love, that is, exert the highest powers of our soul, in favour of those who have no claim on our selfish regard,—our enemies ; and that we are to measure our love to others by our love to *ourselves*. Thus must we be drawn out of ourselves ; thus shall we be led from the creature to the Creator ; and the apostle John, in whom dwelt abundantly the spirit of his Master, tells us, that unless we *do* love our brother whom we *have* seen, we cannot love God whom we have not seen.

Our love to our brother, that is, to every child of our Heavenly Father, has this peculiar power of drawing us from self,—that it calls into action every faculty of our nature, and gives us an opportunity in each to conquer self. The most exalted energies of our souls, which would lie dormant, or be turned to self idolatry, are excited, and thus purified by being freed from selfishness. Thus from the seen shall we pass on to the unseen ; then shall we be prepared to be one with God, which our Saviour has shown us must be our highest felicity, and which he prayed might be enjoyed by us together with him.

FATHER of our feeble race!
Wise, beneficent and kind!
Spread o'er nature's ample face,
Flows Thy goodness unconfin'd:
Musing in the silent grove,
Or the busy haunts of men,
Still we trace thy wondrous love,
Claiming large returns again.

Lord! what offering shall we bring,
At Thine altars when we bow?
Hearts, the pure unsullied spring
Whence the kind affections flow:
Soft compassion's feeling soul,
By the melting eye exprest;
Sympathy, at whose controul
Sorrow leaves the wounded breast.

Willing hands to lead the blind,
Bind the wounded, feed the poor;
Love embracing all our kind,
Charity with liberal store:
Teach us, O Thou heavenly king,
Thus to show our grateful mind,
Thus the accepted offering bring,
Love to Thee and all mankind.

PRAYER

O FATHER of love and mercy! Through that Saviour in whom shone forth Thy perfections would I approach Thee in loving confidence, in childlike simplicity, in humble and joyful hope. Through him only can we thus come unto Thee, and thus would I come, O my Father! As he is one with Thee, so may my spirit be wholly in Thine. May I delight in nothing but what Thou lovest; may I yield myself unreservedly to all Thou appointest for me; may I rejoice in all Thou doest, and feel sure that all is wisest and best. O Father! Thy love is spread all around, it is everywhere; it shines forth in all Thy works. I would love all, O my Father, because it is Thine. But chiefly would I love all into whom Thou hast breathed Thine own immortal spirit,—to whom thou hast given a life that can never die. O help me, I pray Thee, with Thy strength, to feel for them an imperishable love; and following in the footsteps of my blessed Saviour, to give up, if need be, even my life for them. And then, O Father, when I have done and suffered all thou wilt here on earth, do Thou receive me to Thyself, to dwell for ever with Thee, and Thy beloved Son, and the blessed ones whom Thou hast given to me here below,—never to be separated any more.

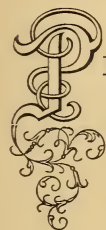
So be it, O Father! Amen.



SATURDAY EVENING.

—o—

Luke vii., 50.—Thy faith hath saved thee ; go in peace.



PEACE! It was a thing she had not fully known since she had left its paths,—those ways of wisdom and pleasantness. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked ; and she had no peace while her sins were many. Nor yet was there perfect peace in that transport of penitence and love in which she stood before Jesus. That was victory, but now Christ gives her *peace* : not as the world giveth, gave he unto her ; her heart was not to be troubled, nor to be afraid. Her faith was strong ; and the belief that Christ had promised her rest, would be her safeguard in the hour of peril. Yet her tears were not for ever dried ! How often in the midst of her most sacred musings, would some impure thought rise up from the vaults of memory !—but then her faith would save her, and she would be able to banish it, and it would even add to her present holiness, by teaching her humility and self-distrust. How often would she feel her powers for good weakened by her past misconduct !—but yet love would

supply the deficiency, and an ardour, before unknown, would inspire, with unwonted force, the energies that were spared her! How often would the remembrance of past sin rise up, like a thick vapour, till faith should save her, and show that

The cloud we so much dread
Is big with mercies, and will break
In blessings on our head!

“Go in peace!” May we apply the words of the Saviour to ourselves! Yet how few of us can! Who can say, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith? Who can feel that the conflict is over, even if it has begun? May God give me such an earnest love of Him, that I may gain the victory over my many foes! We cannot have *perfect* repose till we are perfectly holy; but the warmer our love to the God of goodness, the less shall we experience that fear in which is torment.

“Go in peace,” then, may I hear the Saviour say to me, if, like the penitent woman, I come to him with a lowly and contrite heart,—if I bewail my sins with that true sorrow which bringeth repentance not to be repented of. Let me not slight the blessed invitation,—“Come unto me, *all* ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

BEHOLD the gospel mercy seat!
Let penitence in faith draw near:
Lo! truth and grace with justice meet,
The humble, contrite soul to cheer.

When it bewails the stain of sin,
And shuns the unrighteous thought or deed.
Thou givest mercy, Lord, within.
And grace to help in time of need.

No longer let the gloom and fears
Of nature's twilight sink the heart;
The Saviour's words dispel our tears,
And peace, and hope, and light impart.

He leads us to a Father's throne,
And the sure hope through him is giv'n,
That, when the work of faith is done,
We have a sinless home in heaven.



PRAYER.

ONCE more, O Thou most tender Father, hast Thou brought the week to close on me in peace! Here I raise the altar of thanksgiving, and declare that hitherto my Lord hath helped me. If my heart has been disquieted within me, *Thou* didst not send the trouble. If I have yielded to temptation, *Thou* didst not make it too strong for me. If the week has been barren in holy purposes and endeavours, *Thou* wouldst have made the wilderness to blossom as the rose, if only I had looked to Thee. O

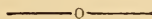
Father, I know not which most to wonder at; Thy long-suffering, or my ingratitude. When, Lord, shall I be wholly Thine, as I long to be? When shall I overcome the sluggishness of my baser nature, and the violence of my lower passions, and love and serve Thee with an undivided heart? Lord I believe: help Thou my unbelief! May I cast aside all self-seeking, and lay my burden of iniquity low at the foot of the cross. May I crucify every unholy desire, and allow of no impure remembrance. May my thoughts be of Thy love, and of my duty. Now, O Father, we are giving ourselves up to unconscious sleep: watch over us all, and preserve us from outward danger, and still more from inward temptation. May the night be holy to us: that we may be prepared for the holy day that shall open to us, whether in this life or in that which is to come. We leave ourselves in thy loving care, through our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Amen.





SECOND WEEK.

SUNDAY MORNING.



Psalm xvi., 11.—In Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

IN what *can* there be any joy pure, lasting, intense, existing in fulness, but in God? He is the fountain of all power, of all wisdom, of all beauty, of all love. In some one or more of them, all who rise above the mere gratification of the senses seek for happiness.

Why should man, child of the dust as he is, seek for power? Yet he does seek it! And who finds it? Not the Conqueror; he enslaves, for a short space, the bodily frame of his fellow creatures, a poor and perishable possession! It may be that his strong will and mighty intellect may also for a time chain their souls, and even cause the vile possessors of them to come and lay at his feet, as a willing offering, that which the whole world should not enthrall; but let a few years pass, and behold this conqueror! His power was of the earth, earthy; to

dust he has returned ; and nothing remains of his dominion save that alone of it which may have had a holy influence on the minds of others ; and how small in general is that part ! Even during his life, it is possible that those circumstances of which he availed himself to obtain his short-lived power, may have hurled him from his height, and left him nothing but the weakness of the things that savour not of God. But the man who trusts in God for strength, who walks in the might of His holiness, armed with the shield of faith, has often obtained, *unsought*, an empire over the hearts and souls of others, which time cannot efface ; and after he has returned to dust, and his name has been almost forgotten, his spirit still broods over the world of thought, and kindles the souls of others to seek and find that power which he had from God alone.

Where shall *wisdom* be found but with God ? Even the foolish things of Him confound the wise of this world. Times without number, philosophers have shown to us the humiliating, yet all-instructive spectacle, of one who, in the eyes of the world, has raised himself to the highest pinnacle of human knowledge, grovelling in the dust beneath the tyrannic sway of his own unhallowed passions, his eyes blinded by them so that he has not been able clearly to see the light of true wisdom ; while the poor and lowly-minded, who have sought it under the guidance of God, have been enabled, by Him, to discern, with a clear eye, the hidden mysteries of His works and His ways.

Some there are who are swallowed up, so to speak, in the loveliness of *beauty*. They seem to live for it ; they care for no enjoyment, but the contemplation of it ; they love nothing, but it ; yet all that is pure, elevating, spiritual, in this beauty which so takes possession of their souls, is

but the faint shadowing of our conceptions of Him who is perfect beauty. All that confines man to self, and ties him to this earth, is impure, degrading, perishable. If we dwell as in the presence of God, even here, we shall see beauty everywhere, not only where His own hand hath worked without the intervention of man, but even where the creature would, at first sight, seem to have blotted out, or defaced, the works of the Creator. Light from the presence of God will shed a glow over everything; and our souls will be refreshed with a constant sense of pure and lovely beauty.

Does not *love*, when pure, afford the highest pleasure of which the human being is capable? Has it not diffused an inexpressible sweetness over the darkest hour? Has it not raised man above the trials, the dangers, the sorrows of the world, and inspired him with a strength not his own,—a strength which is derived from union with the Highest, Holiest, Best? But how seldom can this be enjoyed on the earth in its greatest purity; or, if enjoyed for a season, how soon it is blighted! The imperfections of our nature mingle bitterness with it! but the bliss we have tasted gives us a longing for the enjoyment of it without interruption. God *is* love; in him there is no variableness nor the shadow of changing; here, then, may we fix our deepest, purest love with confidence; in Him shall we have *fulness* of joy.

All, then, that man worthily seeks, is obtained in perfection *only* in the presence of God. With Him, then, only can we find joy; by union with Him alone can the heart of man be fully satisfied. On this earth, in proportion as we walk with God, shall we have a foretaste of this joy; but here we are under the veil; the unconcealed

glories of God would be too dazzling for us to bear. We are none of us clean; and no unclean thing shall touch the Mount of God. It is in His more immediate presence, which we shall enjoy in proportion as we are prepared for it, in the eternal world, that we shall taste pleasures never ending; such fulness of joy as it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive. O the unspeakable riches of the love of God!

BLEST is thy presence, Lord! while lowly bending,
Abas'd by sin, we humbly seek Thy face;
On children of the dust Thy love descending
Shall bid us rise and fill us with thy grace.

And as the glorious sun, from dark clouds breaking,
Dispels the sorrowing dewdrops of the night;
So in our hearts, Thy presence, Lord, awaking,
Chases our fears, and turns our gloom to light.

Hallow'd Thy presence, Lord! before Thee kneeling,
Pure thoughts and holy transports fill the soul;
Thy peace within our troubled spirits stealing,
Far off life's storms and ocean billows roll.

Heavenly Thy presence, Lord; while here before Thee
In faith we see the mansions of the just,
Enraptur'd join th' angelic hosts t' adore Thee,
And make Thee all our joy, our hope, our trust.

And let Thy blessed presence, Lord! attend us,
While struggling in the world with sin and care!
O may Thy everlasting shield defend us!
May all our hearts be Thine, our thoughts be prayer!

P R A Y E R.

O BLESSED Father, may Thy holy presence be with all Thy church, in bright and sensible fulness, on this Sabbath which is dawning on us! Let it be a day of rest from all worldly cares and thoughts,—a foretaste of Heaven. Descend into our souls with all the richness of Thy grace, and fill them with Thy Holy Spirit. Irradiate all around with Thy glory, so that we may thankfully declare that a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. O Father, may I this day so taste the fulness of joy which is in Thy presence only, that henceforth all things may seem dead and cold to me in which there is no savour of it. While I love the world, and the things of it, may I love them only inasmuch as they are Thine, and thus go on my way rejoicing. But, O my Father, how often has Thy presence been hidden from me because I would not see it. How often have I even striven to hide myself from it, because my heart was not with Thee? How many times have I shrunk from the touch of Thine hand, when it chastened me, instead of being thankful to feel it, however severe its stroke, and kissing it with humble childlike love? O Father! Do Thou come with Thy Beloved Son, our Saviour, to make Thine abode in my inmost soul, so that no height, nor depth, nor any creature, no sin nor sorrow, no suffering nor death, may ever separate me from Thy love, now or for ever. Amen.



SUNDAY EVENING.

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Revelation xxii., 1.—And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.



HAT a glorious vision to comfort and encourage us in this lower world!

Here the water of life often runs in small, and hardly perceptible streams, with difficulty making its way along through all the roughnesses and hindrances of this vale of our pilgrimage, sometimes almost lost amid quicksands and marshes. *There* it majestically rolls on its full tide in a river, overshadowed on either side by trees bearing their fresh, luxuriant fruit every month, and whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.

Here the stream of our life is often so tainted with many noxious things, that we can hardly recognise it as having proceeded from the all-holy Fountain; and as we look on these small, polluted streams, exhaling unwholesome vapours, we wonder if they can do any good to beast or even to herb; and it seems impossible to us that they should ever be purified. But the angel shews us the water

of life *pure*. How great a change must there be made in those other waters ! How glorious a change *will* be made when *all* the waters of life shall be gathered into that large river !

The waters of life are here often very turbid ; we cannot see clearly through them ; we are not sure whether it is our vision which is imperfect,—beclouded with mists of self-love, of evil passions,—or whether the water itself has so mixed with the clay of the valley that it cannot be separated from it. Let us patiently endure its dulness for the short time we are *here*, for *there* it will be clear as crystal, reflecting with dazzling lustre all the glorious objects in the heavenly city through which it flows.

Whence is this blessed river of the water of life ? The angel shows it to us proceeding “out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.” *Therefore* is it so large, so pure, so clear. Nothing that is limited can proceed from infinity ; nothing that is impure can come forth from perfect purity , nothing that is dark can emanate from the Fountain of light.

We see here but in part ; we understand but in part. When the perfect is come, this partial seeing, this partial knowing will be done away ; that which is now only the vision of faith will be a glorious reality.

I bless Thee, O my God, that Thou dost sometimes give me these visions to help me through the vale. When I descend from the holy mount where they have shone around me, to continue my pilgrimage below, grant that their light may still be about me ; and that I may go rejoicing on the way Thou hast pointed out for me !

* * * * *

DESCEND my spirit! Rest in humble peace
Where His kind hand hath placed thee, who best knows
Thy mortal frame, remembering thou art dust.
There faith shall whisper thee sweet words of trust,
That if thou steadfast pressest on the way
Of thy high calling; thy affections rise
To things above, nor centre here below;
If, while thou minglest with the cares of life,
Thou doest all to gain thy Father's love;
If, living in the world, mixing with men,
Thou treadest not in their unholy ways;—
Then shalt thou share a joy which human heart
Cannot conceive; then an immortal crown
Shall circle brows which here would dazzled shrink
From its pure brightness. As poor blighted flowers,
Or as the winter rose that scarce unfolds
Its sickly leaves to catch the mid-day sun,
Our feeble spirits sink before the blast,
Nor dare t' imbibe the strong meridian rays;
But *there* the mortal seeds, in weakness sown,
Shall rise in power and glory, heirs with Christ,
Glorious partakers with the sons of God!

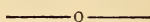
PRAYER.

I BLESS Thee, O Father, that Thou dost sometimes give me the visions of glory to help me through the vale. When I descend from the holy mount where they have shone around me, to continue my pilgrimage below, grant that their light may still be about me; and that I may go rejoicing on the way thou hast pointed out to me. I thank

Thee, and I would take courage from these manifestations of Thy love. During the anxieties and doubts of the week that has now begun, I would remember the holy thoughts of this day of heavenly contemplation. And oh! grant that my heart may be so filled with images of glory, and purposes of duty, that sinful desires shall find no entrance there. May the home of my soul be well furnished with the treasures of the divine life. May no empty places in my affections tempt my bosom foes to assert their old dominion. But, bearing my treasure and my heaven about with me; abounding always in the work of the Lord; thinking on whatever is pure and lovely; subduing, through the strength of Thy Holy Spirit, every earthly and debasing purpose; resolutely choosing the good part which can never be taken away from me; may I proceed from strength to strength, until I appear perfect before Thee in Zion. Unite me, and all dear to me, I pray Thee, in the bonds of Thine eternal love: through Jesus Christ, our beloved Saviour. Amen.



MONDAY MORNING.



1 Thess. v., 17.—Pray without ceasing.



WHAT is prayer? Have we thought that the use of certain forms is necessary to it? Have we deemed it requisite, in order to pray, that we should either join with others, or retire into some secret place to open our hearts to God? Have we supposed that prayer could be performed only at fixed seasons, or when the heart is in a peculiar state of excitement? All these circumstances may be, and often are, highly favourable to devotion. But if we think them necessary, our views of the duty are too narrow. Prayer is far less the use of certain language, than the exercise of certain dispositions and affections; and the great design of the *expression* of prayer is, to strengthen the dispositions and affections in which it peculiarly consists. The design of *forms of prayer* is, to secure us against inconsistency and impropriety, either in the sentiments or the expressions of devotion. The purpose of *social worship* is, peculiarly, to unite our social with our pious affections; and, by the same act, to bind us at once more closely to each other and to God. The object

of *secret prayer* is, the free expression to God of what we could not freely express with, or before, one another. And *seasons of prayer* are prescribed, because the duty, for which we have no allotted time, is easily deferred from hour to hour, from day to day, till it is utterly forgotten. But if the dispositions and affections, in which prayer peculiarly consists, are felt to any considerable degree, it cannot be shut up within the limits of stated hours, and of particular forms and places of devotion; it cannot always wait till others are ready to join in it, nor be restrained by the forms from which, perhaps, it has derived the most important benefits. These dispositions and affections, where they have obtained an ascendancy, will often burst asunder the bonds by which our labours or cares or pleasures would confine them. They will rise to God under the pressure of circumstances and events, which would bear them down to the earth; and in proportion as they are exercised and cherished, will produce the most important effects on our characters, our habits, and our happiness. These momentary, but sincere references and expressions to God, are an accomplishment of the precept, "*pray without ceasing.*" And not only may we thus pray without neglecting any other duty; but in this habitual devotion is the most uniform and powerful excitement to fidelity in every obligation.

PRAYER is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpress'd;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air;
His watchword at the gates of death,—
He enters heaven by prayer.

Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice
Returning from his ways;
While Angels in their songs rejoice.
And say, "Behold, he prays!"

The saints, in prayer, appear as one,
In word, and deed, and mind;
When with the Father and the Son
Their fellowship they find.

* * * * *

O thou, by whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way;
The path of prayer thyself hast trod,
O teach us how to pray!

P R A Y E R.

How shall I speak to Thee, O Thou God of purity and holiness ! to Thee, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity ; and I, who am of unclean lips and unholy thoughts ? Oh touch my heart with Thy love. Lift me above my weakness and sins. Make me of the number of those whose transgression is covered ; of those happy ones to whom Thou imputest not sin. Thou art all-powerful to save ; all-good to bless ; all-merciful to forgive ; all-beneficent to supply the wants of Thy creatures. Our bodily wants Thou meetest with rich abundance. And Thy Divine Spirit is over the hearts of all Thy children, to elevate and purify and bless ; to make them meet for Thy kingdom above. And Thou hast promised to withhold none of Thy gifts from those who call upon Thee out of a pure heart. O Father ! I know that I am sinful. I feel a cloud upon my soul, that tells me I have not been faithful to the high and the holy privilege of listening to Thy words and knowing Thy will. And yet,—I cannot live without Thee. With humble awe, with deep humility of heart and soul, I bow before thee. Oh ! listen to my cry ! From the depths of my heart it ascends to Thee for mercy, for help, for salvation. Oh ! turn me not away. Pour forth Thy Spirit upon me,—Thine own all-conquering Spirit, that tears the rocks and rends the mountains, and finds nothing too hard to resist its holy influences—but the wicked heart of man ! Make me a willing captive to Thy truth. Make me to feel its power in my heart ; raising

me from a death of sin to a life of righteousness; elevating my soul by the contemplation of things above; conforming my will to Thine; creating a clean heart, and renewing a right spirit within me. Lord! I am Thine, though unworthy. As clay in the hands of the potter, so am I in Thine, O God. Make me a vessel meet for my Master's use. I lay myself in the dust before Thee. Subdue my proud and rebellious will. Let sin have no more dominion over me; and songs of rejoicing shall for ever ascend to Thee from my redeemed and glorified spirit; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, our Saviour. Amen.



MONDAY EVENING.

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Philippians iv., 7.—The peace of God which passeth all understanding.

 HERE is a twofold peace. The first is negative. It is relief from disquiet and corroding care. It is repose after conflict and storms. But there is another and a higher peace to which this is but a prelude, a "peace of God which passeth all understanding," and properly called "the kingdom of heaven within us." This state is anything but negative! It is the highest and most strenuous action of the soul; but an entirely harmonious action, in which all our powers and affections are blended in a beautiful proportion, and sustain and perfect one another. It is more than silence after storms. It is a concord of all melodious sounds. Have we never known a season, when, in the fullest flow of thought and feeling, in the universal action of the soul, an inward calm, profound as midnight silence, yet bright as the still summer noon, full of joy, but unbroken by one throb of tumultuous passion, has been breathed through our spirit, and gives us a glimpse and presage of the serenity of a happier world? Of this

character is the peace of religion. It is a conscious harmony with God and the creation; an alliance of love with all beings; a sympathy with all that is pure and happy; a surrender of every separate will and interest; a participation of the spirit and life of the universe; an entire concord of purpose with its Infinite Original. This is peace, and the true happiness of man.

WITH pains, and anxious cares, and griefs oppress,
When shall the worn and weary spirit rest?
Where shall the soul find peace, with sorrow riven?
O tell me, tell me, what and where is heaven?

I send my thoughts above, around, below.
Nor earth, nor air, nor men, the secret know;
On earth no stable resting place I find,
No spring of life to satisfy the mind.

The mind! how manifold, how deep its wants!
It asks, obtains, and yet for more it pants;
It pants, receives, and asks, and restless still
At earthly fountains hopes its springs to fill.

Father divine! this fatal power controul,
Which to the senses binds the immortal soul:
O break this bondage! Lord, I would be free,
And in my soul would find my heaven in Thee.

My heaven in Thee! O God! no other heaven
To the immortal mind can e'er be given:
O let Thy kingdom then within me come.
And as above, so here, Thy will be done!

My heaven in Thee! O Father! let me find
My heaven in Thee, my heaven within my mind:
No more of heaven and bliss my soul despair,
For where my God is found, my heaven is there!

P R A Y E R.

O BLESSED Father! Do Thou, I humbly pray Thee, give me Thy peace,—that peace which the world knoweth not of, and which it can neither give nor take away. My Father! when my soul is separated from Thee, it has no peace; it seeks it hither and thither, but finds it not; it dives into hidden places to discover what it sighs for, but peace flies from it; it strives to content itself with its own treasures,—but all, my Father, is less than nothing and vanity until it turns again to Thee, who alone hast that peace which passes the understanding of man. It passes mine, O my Father! for when Thou givest it me, if but for a few precious moments, my soul is enlarged, all its insatiable wants are satisfied, a bright glory breaks upon it, it desires nothing beside, it beholds nothing beside,—for it is with Thee. O Father, do Thou subdue me unto Thyself, and give me such foretastes of this Heavenly Peace that here below I may travel on rejoicing through the darkest wilderness. Hear me, I pray Thee, O Father, and may I so ask that I may receive, so seek that I may find, so knock that the door of mercy may be opened unto me. Hear me through him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, our blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.

TUESDAY MORNING.

1 John v., 5.—Who is he that overcometh the world,
but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God.

WHAT stronger testimony can be given to the power of this principle of faith in Christ? If it be sufficient to overcome the world, to give life through his name, to effect the Christian regeneration, and a spiritual union with God, to what purpose can it be insufficient; to what work unequal? If this faith be weak, what faith can be called strong?

And that faith in Christ does do this; that it strengthens the soul with such principles, and fills it with such resources that it does not need the world for its happiness, and is capable of resisting its allurements and its terrors, of rising superior to its sin and its misery, there are "clouds of witnesses." The apostles and martyrs who endured all things, and, in the midst of all, "sang praises unto God;" and humbler Christians, in the depths of poverty and distress, yet cheerful, content, and rejoicing; men injured, threatened, and persecuted, yet patient, serene, and uncomplaining, while they can appeal to Him who judges righteously; men lingering in painful sick-

ness, cut off from the engagements of life, their prospects blasted, their hopes disappointed, their props torn away, yet not cast down nor dismayed; but finding, in the dower of faith and heavenly hope, a compensation for their trials, and a victory over the world.

Equally complete is their triumph over spiritual evil. They walk amid the deceitful disguises and fatal ambushes of sin, unseduced and unharmed. Though the passions within ally themselves to the solicitations without, and war against their souls; though the constitution of their bodily frame, and the temper of their mind, the circumstances in which they are thrown, the company which they frequent, and the cares which occupy them, all combine to introduce some disorder in their spirits,—to allure or surprise them to what is wrong, and array them, even against their wills, in disobedience to God; yet, over this fearful combination, against which unassisted man might combat in vain, these men of faith triumph. “God hath given them the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Faith, where its dominion is established in the soul, acts like some superior charm to quell the inferior nature, and awe the rebellious passions to submission. It brings up to them the image of the glorious Master to whom they are bound; of the holy God, who is watching, that he may judge them; of the future world, whose inheritance depends on their purity; and of all the misery and horrors which follow in the train of unsubjected passions and voluntary sin. These press upon their minds with united and intuitive operation; and, with the spontaneous indignation of the patriarch, they put the temptation to flight with the cry, “How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?”

Have I acknowledged Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, so heartily, that he is really and habitually my master, and that his authority rules and controuls me in all things?—so that this faith works by love, purifies my heart, and overcomes the world? Is it in me the parent of holy desires, pure dispositions, good living, and earnest aspirations after the excellence and the bliss of heaven? It is for these qualities that faith is valuable. It is by these that it works out our salvation. It is this efficacy in reforming, purifying, elevating, spiritualizing the human character, that constitutes the glory of the gospel. When it has done this, it has accomplished its great work. If it be doing this for me, I may be satisfied that it is neither fatally erroneous nor weak. But if it be pure as that of angels, and yet do not display this moral power, it is no better than “sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal.”

THOU, who didst stoop below
To drain the cup of woe,
Wearing the form of frail mortality;
Thy blessed labours done,
Thy crown of victory won,
Hast passed from earth,—passed to thy home on high.

Man may no longer trace
In thy celestial face
The image of the bright, the viewless One;
Nor may thy servants hear,
Save with faith's raptur'd ear,
Thy voice of tenderness, God's holy Son!

Our eyes behold thee not,
Yet hast thou not forgot
Those who have plac'd their hope, their trust in thee;
Before thy Father's face
Thou hast prepar'd a place,
That where thou art, there they may also be.

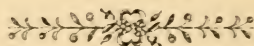
It was no path of flowers,
Through this dark world of ours,
Beloved of the Father, thou didst tread;
And shall we, in dismay,
Shrink from the narrow way,
When clouds and darkness are around it spread?

O thou, who art our life,
Be with us through the strife!
Was not thy head by earth's fierce tempests bow'd?
Raise thou our eyes above,
To see a Father's love
Beam, like a bow of promise, through the cloud.

E'en through the awful gloom
Which hovers o'er the tomb,
That light of love our guiding star shall be:
Our spirits shall not dread
The shadowy way to tread,
Friend, Guardian, Saviour, which doth lead to thee.

PRAYER.

O God and Father, in whose sacred presence the soul bows down with deep awe and fear, I turn to thee ever, as an unfailing refuge, when earthly comforts die. In these hours of the soul's prostration, when the deep-dyed sinfulness of the heart shows its fearful hues; when I sigh for repose of conscience, and find it not; I confess my sins with shame and sorrow, and ask, in all earnestness and sincerity, for Thy forgiveness. Lord! let me not ask in vain. Without the renewing influences of Thy divine Spirit, all good resolutions become weak; clear perceptions of sin are darkened; memories of Thy past mercies are forgotten; the world and the flesh obtain dominion over us; and we sink in the abysses of guilt and error. Oh, save me, save me from this wretched lot. In Thy light only can we see light. Thou hast revealed Thyself to us through Thy Son, that we should no more walk in darkness, but should have the light of life abiding within us. Without this, O God, our hearts grovel in selfishness; the old man, with his deceitful lusts, reigns over us; and the fruit of our lives is unto the death of our souls. Create in me, I beseech Thee, that new man, which is renewed in knowledge after Thine own image; whose fruit is holiness; whose end is everlasting life. Hear me, O Lord, and make me wholly Thine, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



TUESDAY EVENING.

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John iv., 14.—Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.

THE holy Jesus asked water of the woman,—unsatisfying water; but promised that himself, to them that ask it, would give waters of life and satisfaction infinite; so distinguishing the pleasures and appetites of this world from the desires and complacencies spiritual. Here we labour, but receive no benefit; we sow many times, and reap not; or reap and do not gather in; we gather in and do not possess; or possess but do not enjoy; or if we enjoy, we are still unsatisfied,—it is with anguish of spirit, and circumstances of vexation. A great heap of riches makes neither our clothes warm, nor our meat more nutritive, nor our bevarage more pleasant; it feeds the eye, but never fills it; but, like drink to a hydropic person, increases the thirst and promotes the torment. But the grace of God, though but like a grain of mustard seed, fills up the furrows of the heart; and, as the capacity increases, itself grows up in equal degrees, and never

suffers any emptiness or dissatisfaction ; but carries content and fulness all the way, and the degrees of augmentation are not steps and near approaches to satisfaction, but increasings of the capacity. The soul is satisfied all the way, and receives more ; not because it wanted anything, but that it can hold more,—is more receptive of felicities. And, in every minute of sanctification, there is so excellent a condition of joy and high satisfaction, that the very calamities, the afflictions and persecutions of the world, are turned into felicities by the activity of the prevailing ingredient ; for now that all passionate desires are dead, and there is nothing remaining that is vexatious, the peace, the serenity, the quiet sleeps, the evenness of spirit and contempt of things below, remove the soul from all neighbourhood of displeasure, and place it at the foot of the throne, whither, when it is ascended, it is possessed of felicities eternal. These were the waters which were given us to drink when, with the rod of God, the rock, Jesus Christ, was smitten. The spirit of God moves for ever upon these waters, and when the angel of the covenant hath stirred the pool, whoever descends hither shall find health and peace, joys spiritual, and the satisfactions of eternity.

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FOUNTAIN of life and living breath,  
Whose mercies never fail nor fade !  
Fill me with life that hath no death,  
Fill me with light that hath no shade ;  
Appoint the remnant of my days  
To see Thy power, and sing Thy praise.

Lord God of gods, before whose throne  
Stand storms and fire! O what shall we  
Return to heaven, that is our own,  
When all the world belongs to Thee?  
We have no offerings to impart  
But praises, and a wounded heart.

Great God! whose kingdom hath no end;  
Into whose secrets none can dive;  
Whose mercy none can apprehend;  
Whose justice none can feel and live!  
What my dull heart cannot aspire  
To know, Lord, teach me to admire.

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### PRAYER.

GREAT and glorious Lord our God! I would now present myself before Thee, to acknowledge Thee as the author of every mercy, and to supplicate the continuance of Thy favour. At the close of another day, would I remember with gratitude that great goodness which has been displayed in its various comforts and enjoyments. Oh, teach me to grow in goodness, by a constant struggle with my faults and temper, and by constant prayer to Thee for help who alone givest the victory. Teach my heart contented and humble submission to Thy will, though it seem hard to bear. Suffer me not to dwell too much on self; and let me put far from me every mean and unworthy feeling. Preserve in me a deep sense of my accountability to Thee for the manner in which I employ, not only every

hour of my life, but every faculty of my mind. Make me to feel the exceeding worth of my immortal soul. Make me to feel that the salvation which we are exhorted to work out with fear and trembling ought to be no light concern. Oh! keep me from indifference to it. Suffer me not to waste my precious time in vain, frivolous, and unprofitable pursuits. Guard me in my hours of serious business, and especially in those of my professed communings with Thee, against the intrusion of any thoughts that would be unseasonable. Guard me at all times from thoughts that have in them the least shadow of a sin against purity, charity, or piety. Cast down every imagination within me that exalteth itself against the knowledge of Thee; and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Hear me, I beseech thee, and grant that there may be continually in my heart, as well as now on my lips, glory to Thee, our God and Father, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.





## WEDNESDAY MORNING.

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Gen. xvi., 13.—Thou, God, seest me.



AN habitual regard to God as the disposer of events is essential to the comfort of life. A firm conviction that whatever be our station in society it is of God's appointment, and that whatever be our talents He is the giver of them, will be found no less essential to the due exercise and improvement of the various powers conferred upon us. Under its influence we shall be preserved from all false and misleading views of the nature and end of human life, and of the value of the objects which solicit our regard; we shall gain clear conceptions of what we are required to do, in order to answer the design for which we were sent into the world; and in the use and improvement of our opportunities, and means of usefulness, we shall be inclined to diligence and perseverance. We cannot be idle when we know that we are in the presence of our great Master. We cannot presume to waste or to hide our talents if we be under the habitual persuasion that He who has assigned us our task marks every instance of negligence, takes notice of every unprofitable hour we spend, and every useless



pursuit in which we engage. Nor, on the other hand, if we be fully persuaded that our zeal and fidelity are not unobserved by His all-seeing eye, shall we be discouraged if they are not immediately rewarded, if our exertions be undervalued, apparently unsuccessful, or even requited with ingratitude. While we enjoy the unspeakable delight of an approving conscience, we shall be encouraged by the sure prospect of applause, more satisfying than our fellow mortals can give; of a reward more durable than this world has to bestow. Our care will be to "occupy all our talents," and, for the rest, to refer ourselves to Him who judgeth righteously.

Whatever, then, may be the sphere in which we move; in whatever measure of health, or power, or understanding, or any other talent which may be employed for the good of others be dealt out to us; whether our influence be extended or confined, our talents many or few, let us carefully remember, that diligent or slothful, persevering or inconstant, we are "ever in our great Task-Master's eye."

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SPEAK with us, Lord, Thyself reveal,
While here on earth we rove;
Speak to our hearts, and let us feel
The kindling of Thy love.

With Thee conversing, we forget
All time, and toil, and care;
Labour is rest, and pain is sweet,
If Thou, my God, art here.

Here then, my God, vouchsafe to stay,
And bid my heart rejoice;
My bounding heart shall own Thy sway,
And echo to Thy voice.

Thou callest me to seek Thy face!
'Tis all I wish to seek;
To attend the whispers of Thy grace,
And hear Thee inly speak.

Let this my every hour employ
Till I Thy glory see;
Enter into my Master's joy,
And find my heaven in Thee.

PRAYER.

O God, make me to cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of? Oh turn my fear of men's faces into love of their souls. Let me esteem them as fellow servants in Thy work, and fellow travellers to our long home. And where I cannot promote their duty and happiness, grant, O Lord, that they may not hinder mine; and that, when I am not edified, I may not be corrupted by them. O God! may I remember that Thou seest me. May Thy presence ever sway me more than the presence of men; let me account it a small thing to be judged of them; and, instead of being determined by their way or humour, let me regard my own conscience more than their opinion; and do all in Thy sight, heartily as unto Thee. Let it not be my aim to ingratiate myself

with men, but to please the great Judge of all. Yet keep Thy servant, O Lord, from giving scandal and offence to any ; that I may not, by pride and passion, by vanity and indiscretion, or by moroseness and uncharitableness, dishonour my profession, or make the way of truth be evil spoken of. But help me, O my God and Guide, to walk circumspectly ; and to speak and act with due consideration of all times and places, persons and circumstances. Enable me to behave myself wisely, and to guide my affairs with discretion ; and so to go in and out among my fellow creatures upon earth as to preserve my integrity in Thy sight, and have my conversation in heaven, and still enjoy friendship with Thee and with Thy dear Son, our only Lord and Saviour. Amen.



WEDNESDAY EVENING.

Hebrews xii., 9.—The Father of Spirits * * *



HAT thoughts of love and tenderness are awakened by the name of *father*! He was my guardian and support in childhood; he sympathises in all my joys and sorrows; I can fly to him in all my troubles with the certainty that his arms are ever open to receive me. If I have gone astray, he rebukes me; but the sorrow in his tone and manner shows how deeply he is wounded, and this touches my heart more than any punishment.

Is that beloved parent gone to his eternal dwelling? I feel that now, as ever, where he is, is my *home*;—I have no abiding rest but there. All that I most treasure is associated with the thought of him;—most of it I have had directly from him.

If such are some of my thoughts and feelings towards my earthly father—now no longer of earth and sharing the weakness of mortality, but next to be known personally to me as of heaven, heavenly,—what should be those I entertain towards the Father of my immortal spirit?

Christ only can lead us to the “*Father of spirits*;” and, through him, the sure word of revelation has declared to

us that all that is most beautiful and good in the earthly relationship exists in perfection in the heavenly one. I feel that everything I truly enjoy is spiritual. Let me, then, thank the Father of my spirit for it. I constantly want aid and guidance and correction and chastisement; the Father of my spirit will bestow it with all the tenderness of my earthly parent, and with unbounded wisdom. And if my joys and sorrows are such that I do not hesitate to tell them to Him, I shall feel them heightened, not indeed by human sympathy, precious as it is, but by their being blended with infinite love and perfection, by their being under the smile of the Father of spirits.

Yet, do I hold daily and hourly communion with Him? Do I freely pour out my soul to Him? Do I tell Him my joys, and fly to Him in my sorrows? Do I remember that, being a child of His immortal spirit, I should walk in the spirit? Heavenly Father! Thou only knowest! search me and try my ways! chasten me in Thy love as Thine own son, that I may be partaker of Thy holiness.

O my Father, may I seek only Thee, and do Thy will; so may my Heaven begin here, before Thou callest me to Thy more immediate presence above!

Is there a lone and dreary hour,
When worldly comforts lose their pow'r;
My Father! let me turn to Thee,
And set each thought of darkness free.

Is there a time of fear or grief,
Which sees no prospect of relief;
My Father! break the cheerless gloom;
And bid my heart its calm resume.

Is there an hour of peace and joy,
When hope is all my soul's employ;
My Father! still my hopes will roam,
Until they rest with Thee, *their home*.

The noontide blaze, the midnight scene,
The dawn or twilight's sweet serene;
The sick, nay e'en the dying hour,
Shall own my Father's grace and pow'r.

PRAYER.

O LORD, our Heavenly Father! when we neglect our duty in any respect, we feel backward to make our appearance before Thee. Let me free my mind from all consciousness of guilt and of self-reproach, by a constant and a steady discharge of my whole duty. O let me cast off my sins and negligences and evil thoughts; and with a contrite heart ask Thy pardoning mercy. May I experience that inward peace which religion alone can give. May I live nearer and closer unto Thee, my Father. Oh that there were such a heart in me that I could at all times live, act, and speak as in Thy presence. Thou knowest, indeed, that in my better moments I would not willingly transgress even the least of Thy commandments; yet how dull and languid have been my affections! how inadequate the feelings of my heart for the numberless blessings which from day to day Thou showerest down

upon me. O may there be greater devotedness to Thee; and a more earnest purpose, as a follower of Jesus, to bless my brethren of mankind, to promote their present and their everlasting welfare. Give me the spirit of humble trust and of patient endurance. Whatever may be my trials, enable me, I beseech Thee, to bear them with resignation and cheerfulness, as becometh the faithful disciple of him who endured the cross and despised the shame for us men, and for our salvation; and whose prayer it was, "Father, not my will, but Thine be done." O hear me, blessed Father! Amen.



THURSDAY MORNING.

—o—

John xi., 36.—Then said the Jews, see how he loved him.



LET me, then, “see *how* Jesus loved,”—what was the *manner* in which the kind affections were manifested in him. The hours when our Lord was alone with his disciples, or the family at Bethany, are those in which we can most clearly trace the principles by which he was guided in his feelings and conduct in private life, and the manner of their operation. Nothing in those hours of social intercourse is so striking as our Lord’s habitual patient forbearance and self-restraint. The “twelve” had shown, by leaving their employments to follow him, such piety and sincerity of purpose, as had, with their attachment to his person, won his regard; but these good points in their character were united with no small degree of ignorance, prejudice, and ambition. There is scarcely one of these friendly interviews, in which *we* do not find them giving him occasion for this forbearance, and the superior delicacy of our Saviour’s perception of right must have made them still more trying to him; yet his meek affection was equal to the demands upon it. It operated also to prevent him from giving them present pleasure, or saving them from

present pain, of a *worldly* nature. The disciples were not gratified with a miraculous gift of two hundred denarii to buy food for the fainting crowds, though they were made happy by the honourable employment of distributing the ample yet frugal meal. Lazarus was not saved from sickness and dissolution, nor his sisters from sorrow, though he was eventually restored to their embraces and to life. His love to his mother was not permitted to detain him from public life, when the spirit of Jehovah called him out to preach glad tidings; though, before that time, his filial submission drew him instantly from the interesting conversation in the Temple, and prompted him to continue for many years in subjection to his parents.

Thus was every feeling, word, and action of our Lord, founded on love to God, producing conformity to His will;—it was the pure affection of a sanctified spirit for an infinitely Holy Being. And this love to God at once gave him the direction, and determined the intensity, of his love to his fellow mortals. His love to man was stronger than death, but not stronger than duty; it was equally tender and forbearing, unselfish and untiring; and *thus* it was *he* loved.

Here, then, is *my* pattern, in its principle, its direction and degree. Let me look into the state of my kind affections, and see how far they accord with those of Jesus; for this self-knowledge will be requisite. Let me aim at a nearer resemblance to Him in these respects; but for that, there must be self-government. Let me endeavour to know the extent of my deficiencies,—this will demand both humility and courage. Let me open my mind to an extensive survey of the various instances of kindness I have received in looks and manner, as well as in words

and action,—this will call forth my grateful and earnest endeavour to return them. Let me not, however, imagine that I can maintain and exercise these affections perfectly, if they are not habitually directed to Him who is most worthy of all created beings to be loved,—the “Man Christ Jesus.”

Yes, my dear Saviour must I love,
Who first the generous feeling knew.

His piety and purity will refine my affections ; his wisdom and truth and benevolence will chasten and direct my active endeavours to increase the happiness, and bear and submit to the weakness and errors, of those I love.

“SEE how he lov'd!” exclaim'd the Jews,
When Jesus o'er his Lazarus wept ;
My grateful heart the words shall use,
While on his life my eye is kept.

See how he lov'd, who travell'd on,
Teaching the doctrine from the skies ;
Who bade disease and pain be gone,
And call'd the sleeping dead to rise.

See how he lov'd, who, firm, yet mild,
Patient endured the scoffing tongue ;
Who oft provoked, yet ne'er revild,
Nor did his greatest foe a wrong.

See how he lov'd, who never shrank
From toil or danger, pain or death ;
Who all the cup of sorrow drank,
And meekly yielded up his breath.

See how he lov'd who died for man;
Who laboured thus, and thus endur'd,
To finish the all-gracious plan,
Which life and heaven to man secur'd.

And shall such love not meet return?
Not prompt the conduct, move the breast?
Shall not my grateful bosom burn
To prove my love by every test?

Yes! my dear Saviour will I love,
Who every generous feeling knew:
His faithful follower ever prove,
And keep his pattern still in view.

P R A Y E R .

O GOD, our Heavenly Father, how great have been the offers of Thy mercy unto the children of men by Thy Son Jesus Christ. May I not receive the grace of God in vain. Thou Thyself hast deigned to beseech us; Christ hath died for us. Shall his example and sufferings, and Thy invitations, O God, be unheeded by me? Oh! quicken my heart with thankfulness, love, and devoted zeal; and enable me to offer myself body and soul to Thee, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. May I be his true follower. He hath said "Whosoever will be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." And is any cross of ours equal to the cross of Christ? Shall my love of Christ be so feeble an emotion that it will encounter no difficulty, that it will make no sacrifice?

Oh! never let me shrink from a faithful allegiance unto our blessed Saviour. Hath he not promised all needful help to those who seek it in faith? Shall I not be enabled to bear and do all things in his spirit? And have I not the blessed assurance that nothing shall ever separate us from Thy love to us in Christ Jesus? May I feel that this world is not my portion; that it must not have my heart. May all I possess,—my time, my thoughts, my energies, my worldly means, be consecrated entirely unto Thee, our God; and may I, with Thy gracious help, go on from strength to strength, from glory to glory, till mortality is swallowed up of life; through him that died, and rose again, and that sitteth at Thy right hand for evermore. Amen.



THURSDAY EVENING.

—o—

Isaiah xxx., 15.—In quietness and in confidence shall
be your strength.



MY soul! may not these words be addressed to thee? Not only my active endeavours to do my duty, but even my secret efforts and aspirings are wanting in that repose of spirit, that calm waiting upon God, which is so characteristic of the peace of the Gospel.

The *strong* emotions of the soul, the *striving* with tears, the *earnestly* pressing forward, may all be found necessary in the Christian warfare, to reveal the depths of the heart; to excite a longing desire for heavenly things; to prepare and nerve the Christian for the combat; —but when he has called up all his powers, and kindled the holy flame, let everything subside into that calm which dwells in the fullness of the spirit; —“in *quietness* shall be your strength.”

And it shall be in *confidence*. In confidence, not merely that all things are ordered by an all-wise and holy Being; but that His watchful eye has an *individual* care for every one of His creatures, and appoints for each that *mode* of discipline which He knows to be most conducive to his well-being; in confidence that He heareth prayer, and will grant aid where it is truly sought; in confidence in His

love to us, which is unbounded as His own infinite nature. Where can we gain strength but in such confidence as this?

Quietness *precedes* confidence. When, in the midst of the stormy whirlwind of action and passion, we are apt to trust to our own frail barks,—to impute all we effect to our own efforts,—to cry, “Behold this great Babylon that I have built ;” and we hear not the voice of God until after the storm, in the still small whisper in our souls. When the heart is calmed, we can feel the power and behold the brightness of our Father’s love ; we can yield ourselves to Him, and desire to be led by Him wherever He chooseth. Thus we can have confidence that we are treading in the right path ; and we shall feel a strength which will carry us through the troubles and temptations of life.

How long, O my soul, wilt thou be restless and agitated by unreasonable activity,—by over-excited feelings,—by an engrossing imagination,—in fine, by all those things which are not quietness ?

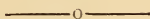
O my Father ! do Thou grant me Thine aid to come to Thee with confidence,—to find in Thee my strength.

LORD ! it is not life to live,
If Thy presence Thou deny ;
Lord ! if Thou Thy presence give,
’Tis no longer death to die.
Source and Giver of repose !
Singly from Thy smile it flows :
Thee to see, and Thee to love,
Perfect bliss. below, above.

PRAYER.

LORD and Father! In Thee only is the fountain of life. In Thy presence alone trouble passes away, and afflictions become sweet. I would not desire to find joy apart from Thee, nor peace in following my own ways. Thou hast declared that the wages of sin is death, and I feel that it is so. When we repine and are fretful, we know that our hearts love not Thee in Thy dealings. Father! give me life in Thy light and love. May eternal life abide within me; so that sorrow and discontent and evil desires, and all perishable things, shall be swallowed up in the intensity of the spiritual affections, and shall give place to heavenly purposes and hopes. And in the times of deep affliction, when the flesh is weak through manifold trials, and the heavy hand of suffering is laid upon me, and the burden of past remembrance adds bitterness to gloom, then, O Father, be Thou especially near to deliver me through the mighty power of Thy spiritual strength. Thus be Thou my support, so long as Thou hast work of active or patient service for me, in this imperfect being, and when Thou hast done with me here, and callest me to the unseen world, may I not feel that I am losing that which has hitherto been life, but finding that which before I had enjoyed in part only,—even Thy perfect love, O Father, in the eternal kingdom of Thy blessed Son, our Redeemer. Amen.

FRIDAY MORNING.



2 Cor. v., 7.—For we walk by faith, not by sight.

WE walk by faith," says the apostle, and "not by sight." We are guided by the things eternal, rather than by the things temporal. We pursue the realities, rather than the shadows. We fasten our hold on that which is permanent, rather than on that which our sight itself may tell us is passing away. In the concerns of our souls, we regard the Author of our souls, and not the enemies of our souls. We strive to conform our conduct to the commandments of God, rather than to the custom of the time. We keep our hearts fixed on the world which is to come, and the glories which will be revealed, rather than on the present world, which soon will be no more, and its objects, which will soon vanish from our eyes. This is the declaration of St. Paul; and the way which he adopts and announces is the only true, and rational, and living way. The Christian has far more reason, more evidence, and better authority for walking by faith, in the path of conduct, and the regulation of life, than they who question or wonder at him can have for walking by sight. In his turn he may

question and wonder at them. Why, he may ask, do you walk by sight? Why, formed to look upward, are you continually bending your spirit towards earth? Why do you confine your hope, that divine and soaring faculty, to fleeting objects, which perish while you pursue them? Why do you bind your affections so tightly to things which, though visible, are visibly withering, and which, even if they should remain, cannot follow you, cannot be taken with you out of the world? Why do you look for your friends among the dead, as if the clods of the valley could bury goodness, or hide and cover sin? Are you yourselves going nowhere but to the grave, which necessarily bounds and terminates every earthly prospect? Alas! that all your sight, that all your evidence, should be shut up there; should end by conducting you there! Is there no God, no Christ, no resurrection, no immortality? Is the short life of sense more worthy than the eternal life of the soul? Oh! why do you walk by sight?

Do I walk by faith? Do I walk as if there were other things in existence beside what I see, and of far more glory and desirableness than what I see with my mortal sight? Do I walk as if Christ had risen from the dead and revealed another world to my soul, in comparison with which this world is nothing; but in preparation for which this world is everything? Let me ponder with myself that question. And let me remember that the question is not whether I merely believe in God, in Christ, in the unseen and spiritual world, but whether I mould my dispositions, my purposes, my actions, after the image of that belief; not merely whether I *have* faith, but more especially whether I *walk* by faith; whether, believing in God, I walk in the way of His commandments; whether, believing

in Christ, I walk as he walked, in benevolence, self-denial, and piety; whether, believing in his resurrection, I acknowledge its power, and rise from sin, and set my affections on things above?

O THOU! in sovereign majesty enthroned
O'er all the seen and unseen universe;
Supreme, omnipotent, all-wise, all-good;
For ever present, though invisible;
Thee, King and Father, humbly I adore!
Thee, I adore, eternal light and love!
Yet who can worthily express Thy praise,
That praise which falters on angelic tongues;
That praise, above e'en seraph's loftiest lays?
Sole fountain of existence, and of all
For which existence may be hail'd and priz'd,
What, what is man, that he may raise to Thee
His thought, his prayer! O Excellent Supreme,
From whom alone are all the pow'rs of thought,
Aid me my thought, my love, to raise to Thee!
Aid me on Thee to fix my best desires;
Of Thee to seek my best, my highest good;
In Thee to find my happiness complete!
And where, O where, but at that sacred fount,
That spring perennial of heavenly peace,
At which angelic natures undefil'd,
And the perfected spirits of the just,
Once here on earth, drink and are satisfied,—
Where, O God, shall man, immortal man,
Slake his insatiable, his burning thirst,
But at that sacred fountain of Thy grace,
Thy truth eternal, Thy unfathom'd love,
Which springs and flows beneath Thy mercy seat?
O glorious spring of life, for ever full,
For ever flowing, rich, and free to all,

I come, a wanderer weary on his way,
To cool my fever'd heart and parched lips
In those pure waters, of which he that drinks,
Live while he may, will never thirst again.
And thou, my Lord, my Saviour, thee I hail
By ev'ry name to gratitude endeared;
For it was thou who led'st my panting soul
From earth's delusive streams, to that pure well
Of water, springing up to endless life!
Here, then, from henceforth, be my resting place.
Here, holy Father, on my soul I call,
And all within me, to adore Thy grace
In Christ my Lord, Thy gift unspeakable;
Thy Son, the sinner's friend and counsellor;
The wanderer's guide, the mourner's comforter;
The worn and wearied spirit's rest and peace.
Father! to Thee a suppliant I come,
In Thee to find my bliss, my heaven, my home!
Prostrate in dust, Thy mercy I implore,
That mercy grant, my God,—I ask no more!

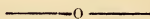
PRAYER.

LORD! We are continually with Thee. Impress this thought upon my heart, that it may be pure, and glad, and grateful. Let me not forget Thy presence, and Thy help. All Thy past dealings towards us shew Thy goodness, care, and bounty. When we know and feel that Thou art with us, our weakness is turned to strength; our darkness to light, our doubts and fears to hope and confidence. It is then that temptation loses its power, and sin its dominion, and trials their weight. It is then that crosses are borne in patience, and duties performed with

pleasure. Lord! I need, I ask, a lively and constant sense of Thine omnipotence, to make me holy and happy. O Lord, I implore Thy guidance. Thy counsel alone can direct me in the way of peace and safety. It is Thy wisdom that makes us truly wise. Make me to know and follow the teachings of Thy word and Spirit, and the example of Thy Son, that I may honour Thee on earth, and be prepared for the mansions of glory in Thy kingdom. May I ever contemplate Thee as the sum of all perfection, the chief good, the greatest and most glorious Being in the universe; infinitely worthy of the homage, praise, and obedience of all thy creatures. May I see that without Thee we are nothing; and that all our springs of life and happiness are in Thee. Grant me this pious concentration of feeling and thought, that my soul may be united to Thee by a holy, supreme, and constant love. And when I view Thee as the only object of our supreme regard in heaven, may nothing on the earth destroy or abate my love to Thee. Let me not esteem the creature more than the Creator; or lose sight of the Giver in His manifold gifts. Purify and elevate the desires of my soul, so that it may be my study and delight to do Thy will, and please Thee in all things. So long as I dwell on earth, may I live as a pilgrim and stranger; and lay up my treasure, and have my conversation in heaven. I ask it in the name of our ever blessed Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.



FRIDAY EVENING.



Jeremiah xxxi., 18.—Turn thou me, and I shall be turned.

AS this truly and earnestly my prayer? Do I sincerely desire to be turned? Do I feel my own inability, unaided, to work the great change of heart which God requires, which my own soul longs after? O Father, Thou knowest.

I continually feel my weakness, and I know that this weakness in great part arises from not resting firmly and constantly on my Father's arm, from not being girt with the armour of faith. Do I pray from my *inmost soul*, "Out of weakness make me strong?" I have daily and humiliating proofs of the evil that is in me; I see my best resolves, my highest aspirations stifled by unholy passions; my purest actions sullied by self-seeking. Is my sincere and earnest supplication, "Give me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me?"

He ever heareth prayer; faint and lowly though it be. He will give it an answer of peace, though it may be very different from that which we should, in our ignorance, have desired. But He does send it; let me receive it

humbly and thankfully as a token of His love; let me be ready to be turned, when, in answer to my prayer, He turns me. Perhaps the messenger He sends to call my wandering heart back to Himself is in a form in which I scarcely recognise it as such. It may be the loss of property, of worldly consideration; shall I harden my heart against it, and receive it with stoical indifference? O rather let me humbly listen to its voice, warning me to set my affections on things above, not on things below, and meekly suffer myself to be turned to whatever God would have me to be. Perhaps friends have proved faithless, and instead of filling my cup of life with sweetness, have embittered it with heart-burnings, with unjust suspicions. This too is from God, who thus warns me to centre my highest trust and love in Him alone. Or my schemes of usefulness have failed, as it seems, through the perverseness and ill-will of those who should have been foremost to aid them. Even this is an answer to my prayer; God would so teach me to be a more humble labourer in His vineyard,—to sow and plant diligently, and leave it to Him to give the increase in His own good time. It may be that God visits me with a grievous sickness; the burden of the flesh becomes very heavy, and, without the sure faith that it comes from my Father,—I might desire for myself that I should die. Let me even now, in my sorest agony, thank my God that He is thus turning me. It is thus that He breaks my proud spirit; it is thus that He opens my soul to the tender influence of love; thus does He make me feel the nothingness of all but Him; thus does He turn me to Himself.

O my Father; my prayers are very weak; my best resolves are but as the morning dew, which soon passeth

away. Quicken Thou me with Thy spirit; answer my prayers, not after my own erring desires, but after Thy own perfect wisdom and love, and finally receive me to Thyself, to be one with Thee!

From the recesses of a lowly spirit
My humble prayer ascends—O Father, hear it!
Upsoaring on the wings of fear and meakness,
Forgive its weakness.

I know, I feel, how mean and how unworthy
The trembling sacrifice I pour before Thee;
What can I offer in Thy presence holy,
But sin and folly?

For in Thy sight—who every bosom viewest,
Cold are our warmest vows, and vain our truest;
Thoughts of a hurrying hour; our lips repeat them,
Our hearts forget them.

We see Thy hand—it leads us, it supports us;
We hear Thy voice—it counsels and it courts us;
And then we turn away—and still Thy kindness
Pardons our blindness.

And still Thy rain descends, Thy sun is glowing;
Fruits ripen round, flowers are beneath us blowing;
And, as if man were some deserving creature,
Joys cover nature.

O how long suffering, Lord! but Thou delightest
To win with love the wandering—Thou invitest
By smiles of mercy,—not by frowns or terrors,
Man from his errors.

Who can resist Thy gentle call—appealing
To every generous thought and grateful feeling?
Thy voice paternal—whispering, watching ever,
My bosom?—Never.

Father and Saviour! plant within this bosom
These seeds of holiness—and bid them blossom
In fragrance and in beauty bright and vernal,
And spring eternal.

Then place them in those everlasting gardens,
Where angels walk, and seraphs are the wardens;
Where every flower that creeps through death's dark portal,
Becomes immortal.

PRAYER.

FATHER of mercies, who graciously bestowest Thy Holy Spirit on such as seek it in sincerity and truth, grant that I may come before Thee at this time in humility and love, and do Thou help me effectually against my sins and infirmities. O heavenly Father, leave me not, I pray Thee, to myself; but be pleased yet to move me to the love and obedience of whatever Thou dost command. Thou knowest, Searcher of hearts, how I fear and distrust myself. Oh bring me, through Christ our Redeemer, unto Thyself, by whatever means Thou shalt deem best; that I may yield myself entirely to the influence of Thy Holy Spirit. Make me earnest and faithful, that I may do my part in the great work of the soul's salvation. May I not shrink from whatever Thou shalt require at my hands.

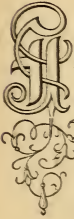
Oh deign to remove from me weakness, indecision, want of faith ; and grant that I may serve Thee with entire love and trust and devotedness to duty. I would love Thee, our God and Father, with *all* my heart, and mind, and soul, and strength. Oh may I love Thy Son, our Saviour, and his blessed work, and may I prefer him and his cross before all that this world can offer. Breathe, O God, the spirit of holiness into my spirit, and make me truly and solely devoted unto Thee. Let me through Christ be Thine in every purpose of my soul ; Thine in all my thoughts and plans ; Thine in all my labours ; Thine in my intercourse with my family, my friends, and the world ; Thine in every joy, in every sorrow ; Thine in all the changes of life, in the hour of death, and in eternity. Amen.



SATURDAY MORNING.

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Mark x., 50.—And he, casting away his garment,
rose and came to Jesus.

ESUS called the blind Bartimæus. He hesitated not one moment; he threw away every incumbrance; he rose from the posture of hopeless indolence, and hastened to him who was strong to save. Has Jesus never called *us*? When, indeed, has he *not* called us? He calls us to our prayers,—“Seek, and ye shall find,—ask the Father in my name.” He calls us to his feast,—“This do in remembrance of me.” Yet are we even willing to approach? We are sitting: if he would come to us we might receive him; but we will not rise, still less will we cast away our garments; and any mantle of pride, any habit of indolence, is enough to keep us from him. The blind man was ready to come when Christ called, because he had been very forward in calling on Christ. He knew his need and welcomed his physician.

As for us, instead of calling loudly on Christ, by summoning to our aid the blessed promises of his word, we suffer him to call loudly on us. We allow conscience, time after time, to repeat to us the invitations of the Gospel,

and all in vain. We rebuke it; we bid it hold its peace;* and here we are, still blind, still sitting on the ground; and Christ, meanwhile, having long invited us, is leaving us. One warning of Providence after another breaks, unheeded, on our ears. We turn ourselves in our mantle and become deaf as well as blind.

Have pity on us, O our Father! Thou greatest, most merciful of Beings! Thou who art everywhere present, look on us as we sit by the way. Show us the path that Jesus has trod, that we may rise and follow him unto Thee!

LORD! we sit and cry to Thee.
Like the blind beside the way;
Make our darken'd souls to see
The glory of Thy perfect day:
Lord! rebuke our sullen night,
And give Thyself unto our sight.

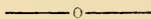
Lord! we do not ask to gaze
On our dim and earthly sun;
But the light that still shall blaze
When ev'ry star its course hath run;
The glory of Thy blest abode,
The uncreated light of God.

* Matthew xx., 31.

PRAYER.

FATHER of light, every good and perfect gift cometh from Thee. I thank Thee for the light which shines upon the world with beauty and health, and for the eyes which are the light of my body, revealing to me the glories amidst which I dwell. My Father, what a priceless blessing hast Thou given to me, even from my birth. Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun! O that I may be as eyes to the blind, and help and cheer those who live in a perpetual night. But, most holy God, there may be darkness even at noon-day; whilst I think I see, I may be blind—blind in heart, blind in soul—the very light within me may be darkness. Thou who didst send the true Light from heaven, shine on me I beseech Thee; clear away the motes and the beams that blind me, that there may be no dark place within. Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; let them never be the occasions of sin. In Thy light may I see light. May the beauties which gladden my sight sanctify my heart, and rejoice my soul. May the way of duty become clearer, and the beamings of Thy love more manifest. May the clouds and darkness disperse, and may the true light shine on me. May Thy visible mercies prepare me for those that eye hath not seen; and when the night hath come wherein no man can work, and mine eyelids are sealed in death, then, O Thou God and Father of my Saviour Jesus Christ, open to me the glories of the heavenly day, and admit my soul to dwell with him in the eternal light of eternal love. Amen.

SATURDAY EVENING.



Romans xiii., 10.—Love is the fulfilling of the law.



LAW has no hold on our affections. It is an abstract principle regulating our behaviour to one another. It makes an appeal to the mind for support; and if the mind had unbounded sway, law would be all-powerful; for what it commands would be perceived to be best, not only for those whom it appears particularly intended to protect, our neighbours, but also for ourselves. But man is swayed by self-love and by his feelings, as well as by his mind; and they most commonly hold strong dominion over him. Hence, law is obliged to appeal to force to ensure obedience; its present terrors compel obedience to the laws of man: and its fears, though more remote, yet more awful, induce some degree of unwilling submission to the laws of God.

Man seldom delights in the law; he escapes from it whenever he can; and, while he obeys the letter, often neglects the spirit. He not unfrequently makes a cool calculation whether the penalty of the law will not be more than overbalanced by the pleasures of disobedience.

But let *love* fill the soul,—love of God and love of His creatures,—how is everything altered! Love, which considers all around as other selves, will be as considerate of

the welfare of others as of itself; and a man will no more, by infringing a law, injure others, than he would willingly injure himself. He not only fulfils the law, with thankfulness that he has such a guide, but he goes beyond it; he anticipates its commands. Love cannot work ill to his neighbour; the ends of law are already accomplished. And now, with respect to God, fear is no longer necessary to lead us to obey Him; fear hath trembling, and we cannot tremble before one who loves us as God loves us, and who chastens us only in mercy. We seek to know His will more perfectly, that we may do it better; and we love to do it because it will unite us more to Him.

What gratitude is sufficient for us to feel to our Saviour, who hath brought us into the state of children, not servants; who hath taught us to be bound to each other, and to our Father, in love; who hath thus enabled us, even here, to have a foretaste of the perfect love and blessedness which eternal life will bring us? "This is the message we have heard of him, that God is light;" "This is the promise he hath promised us, eternal life."

O may love grow brighter and brighter in us unto the perfect day!

THEE will I love, my strength, my tower;
Thee will I love, my joy, my crown;
Thee will I love with all my power,
In all Thy works, and Thee alone;
Thee will I love, till holy fire
Fills my whole soul with strong desire.

Ah! why did I so late Thee know;
Thee, lovelier than the sons of men?

Ah! why did I not sooner go
To Thee the only ease in pain?
Ashamed I sigh; and only mourn
That I so late to Thee did turn.

In darkness willingly I stray'd!
I sought Thee, yet from Thee I rov'd;
Far wide my wand'ring thoughts were spread;
Thy creatures more than Thee I lov'd;
And now, if more at length I see,
'Tis through Thy light and comes from Thee.

I thank Thee, uncreated sun,
That thy bright beams on me have shin'd:
I thank Thee who hast overthrown
My foes, and heal'd my wounded mind;
I thank Thee, whose enlivening voice
Bids my freed heart in Thee rejoice.

Uphold me in the doubtful race,
Nor suffer me again to stray;
Strengthen my feet, with steady pace
Still to press forward in Thy way;
My soul and flesh, O Lord of might!
Replenish with thy heavenly light.

Give to mine eyes refreshing tears.
Give to my heart chaste, hallow'd fires;
Give to my soul, with filial fears,
The love that all heav'n's host inspires;
That all my powers, with all their might,
In Thy sole glory may unite.

Thee will I love, my joy, my crown,
Thee will I love, my Lord, my God;
Thee will I love beneath Thy frown
Or smile, Thy sceptre or Thy rod:
What though my flesh and heart decay,
Thee shall I love in endless day.

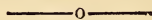
P R A Y E R.

O THOU who art the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our God and Father! above all Thy innumerable blessings do I present unto Thee my humble, grateful thanks for this,—that Thou hast made me capable of knowing and loving Thee. O Father! I would centre in Thee my heart's purest, holiest love. There it will ever be safe, for in Thee there is no variableness nor the shadow of changing. I am Thy child, created with the breath of Thy spirit; Thou hast loved me before the creation of the world, Thou wilt love me for ever, for I am Thine. O Father! reveal Thyself to me, in all Thy holiness and love, through Thy beloved Son, so that I may behold Thee ever, and rejoice in Thee ever, and desire nothing but Thee. May no dark clouds of passion, no longing for the things of this world, no striving after ought that savours of earth, hide Thee from my soul. O Father! oft'times have I been wounded in spirit, oppressed with the cares of time, saddened with the sight of wickedness and suffering, and well nigh cast down, because I did not feel Thy love within me. O, when I am thus fainting, do Thou strengthen my spirit, and I shall be strong to suffer,—to endure all. And when, as a loving child, I have done all Thou wouldst have me to do here below, take me, O take me, to those blessed mansions above, where, united in one holy bond to the loved ones who have gone before, I shall dwell for ever in Thy more immediate presence, never to be separated from it any more. Amen.



THIRD WEEK.

SUNDAY MORNING.



Rev. xxi., 4.—And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.

“**G**OD shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” Tears are the visible and affecting expressions of distress; and, therefore, to say there shall be no more tears, is to say, that all those causes of sorrow, which exist in the present world, shall be eternally removed. “There shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying;” because these are the causes which rend the hearts of men, and suffuse their eyes with tears.

There shall be no more tears of separation. The longest and most painful separations are those which are caused by death; and what eye has not been dimmed with tears by this? He must have been unhappy indeed over whose unmoistened grave no tears are shed, and whose

death has occasioned no regrets. But the number of those is few. Death rends all hearts. When Joseph died, the children of Israel wept sore. "My Father! my Father!" exclaimed Elisha, when Elijah was taken away from him. "O my Son Absalom! O Absalom, my Son, my Son," said the much-moved David, as he "went up to the chamber over the gate," that he might weep alone. And when his friend Lazarus died, "Jesus wept." Well, be it so. To weep and to be wept is the irreversible decree as to man below; but then, so much the more welcome the state we hope for. A great voice is heard out of heaven, "And there shall be no more death." The sight would be a blot in the tabernacle of God. The rigid limb, the silent pulse, the breathless lip, the pallid cheek, the fixed and darkened eye; these, these are not scenes for heaven. But this is the decree:—"There shall be no more death." This shall restore and perpetuate your friendships, and wipe the tears of separation away for ever.

And with the tears of separation pass away all those which pain wrings from the tortured body, or sorrow from the wounded spirit. Martyrs, you have been racked and torn; but there is now no more pain for you; for, like your Master, you have exchanged your crown of thorns for a crown of glory. Patient sufferers from disease,—you could weep, though you could not murmur; but wearisome nights are no longer appointed you. Nor does the spirit, full charged with its inward griefs, pour the floods into the eyes. No publican here smites on his breast, exclaiming, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" No Peter, the cowardly denier of his Lord, goes out to weep bitterly. No tears of shame and grief are shed over barrenness of spirit and hardness of heart. Zion no longer cries, "the

Lord hath forgotten me." "There shall be neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain."

And we may add, that there shall not be even tears of joy. For what do they suppose? The joy which finds relief in tears supposes a previous anguish; and that the change from one state to another shakes the feebleness of mortality. Or it supposes that we are so unused to strong emotions that our measure of joy is soon filled up; that even the bliss of earth may be too copious for the contracted vessel of our hearts; and, therefore, so easily overflows in tears. But there shall be no such alternations in heaven; nor will the capacity for blessedness be thus limited. Joy will not be so much a stranger that we shall weep at meeting it. It will be habit, not accident. It will be, not the transient flash which dazzles, overpowers, and disappears; but the fixed and steady element in which we shall live for ever.

And the text gives the reason of all this:—"The former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." How impressive and sublime is the scene thus presented! Under the throne of him who is arrayed in the glory of the Father, lie heaven and earth, the present seat of death and sorrow and pain. He speaks, and they vanish, and the former things are passed away. He speaks again, and a new heaven and earth spring into being. "The tabernacle of God is with men;" and he that sitteth upon the throne saith, "Behold, I make all things new." What a dream will then our earthly sufferings and labours, our joys and our sorrows, appear! They have passed away, and a new world opens to our view to abide for ever.

O for the winged seraph's power to soar
Into those fields of everlasting light
Where darkness is not! O for pow'r to ascend
To those blest regions to which Jesus rose
From the dark tomb, the herald of our way;
Himself the first fruits of the sleeping dead!
O for the freedom of those sons of God,
The bright, immortal spirits of the just,
No longer held by bonds of earth and flesh,
Of sense and passion; all whose trials o'er,
Whose sorrows ended, and whose joys complete,
Now stand before the throne of the Most High,
Seeing as they are seen, and knowing Him,
The eternal One, ev'n as they are known!
Arise, my trembling, fainting soul, arise,
And join this glorious band of worshippers.
See where they stand, a host of witnesses
To tell thee 'tis thy Father's house, thy home,
In which they wait thy coming. Like thyself,
They once sustained their mighty conflict here.
Like thee they toil'd and suffer'd, hop'd and fear'd.
They pass'd through darkness, deep as ever hung
Over thy path; through ways as rough and hard
As ever wore thy tir'd and pilgrim feet.
Wilt thou, then, sink, or murmur at thy lot
When tried, or charge thy Father foolishly?
Lord, I believe; help Thou my unbelief!
Lord, I believe; increase, increase my faith!
O for a will entirely bow'd to Thine!
O for a heart in every thought so pure,
In every spring of feeling so refin'd,
That e'er this body may a temple be
Meet for Thy holy spirit! Father! hear.
O hear my prayer, and answer, and forgive!

Thy kingdom come, O God, within my soul!
Thy will be done in me as 'tis in heav'n!
Then, then will faith its highest triumphs prove
When I am perfected in heavenly love.
Then, with a seraph's wing, my soul shall rise,
And join, e'en here, the worship of the skies.
Then will my highest pleasures be my last,
And heaven begin before the world be past.

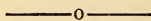
PRAYER.

O FATHER! On this blessed morning, hallowed by the remembrance of him, Thy Holy Son, who brought life and immortality to light,—shine, I pray Thee, on my soul with the brightness of Thy glory, so that I may see in faith the time when all former things shall have passed away; when there shall not be any more pain, neither sorrow nor crying; when there shall be no more death, and Thou—Thou, blessed Father—with Thy loving hand, wilt wipe for ever all tears from our eyes. Thou hast promised it, O Father, and Thy promise is sure. Lord, I believe, O increase my faith. Purify my soul by a daily, an hourly, devotion to Thy will. Let Thy kingdom come within me. Let me count all trials and sorrows as but joy, so that I may win Christ and be found of him. Let me kiss Thy rod, knowing that it is a sure token that I am Thy child—Thy beloved one. Let me ever behold around me the

cloud of witnesses whose trials are ended, whose joys complete, and who, even now in Thy presence, are near me in spirit,—Thy ministering angels whom Thou hast given charge concerning me. Then, O Father, though tears may dim my outward eyes, shall I clearly behold in faith Thy love and mercy, and go cheerfully on my way, sustained by Thy presence, until Thou shalt call me home. Amen.



SUNDAY EVENING.



Hebrews vii., 16.—* * * * endless life.



HAT is life? Can it be anything but dwelling in Him who alone is of Himself *life*?

His life is faintly, yet most brightly and gloriously, shadowed forth to us in His works and His ways, by nature and by revelation.

The attributes of the divine life that most strike us are unbounded *wisdom* to devise, *power* to execute, and *love* to make everything work together for the happiness of every existing thing. Only in partaking of these we can enjoy life.

Even in this lower world we can enjoy true life to such a degree as to give us an earnest longing after that which is perfect and *endless*. We can feel the intellectual part of our being so exalted by the discoveries of the wondrous ways and works of God, and by being permitted to dive into His hidden plans in the construction of this wondrous fabric of the earth, that it seems, though still on earth, almost freed from the clog of mortality. Love may be so entrancing and receive such heavenly food, even here, from the affections and sympathies which the Father of love hath implanted in the human heart, that it may shed

a glow all around, and we may love God, and the creatures of His hand, with a purity that may seem even now to make us partakers of the divine life. The spirit may at times so completely soar above time and sense, and be so fully imbued with a feeling of the blended wisdom, power, and love of the Great Spirit, that it may, even here, occasionally enjoy *life*, and, like St. Paul, not know whether it is in the body or out of the body. But how soon do we descend from the mount where the bright cloud of God's holy presence overshadows us! How much dominion have the perishable things of this world over us,—how much more fatal a dominion the plagues of our own hearts! How continually have we to lament the imperfection of even our most holy things! But we are promised endless life. We are told, in words that cannot fail, that “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, what God hath prepared for them that love Him.” If, then, the human eye *hath* seen, and the human ear *hath* heard, things so glorious that, in default of language to express them, we have said that moments in which they have been enjoyed have been worth a whole existence, what will be a life consisting *entirely* of glory and happiness infinitely greater and endless!

O the unspeakable riches of the love of God, who hath bestowed such a gift on man! What brightness should such hopes, such glimpses of eternal glory, shed over this, our present existence, which is a preparation for it! What patient waiting, what unwearied, humble, earnest striving should be ours, that we may be found worthy to receive such an inheritance!

SORROW and darkness fled away,
And I beheld eternal day!

 No *night* was ever there;—
None feebly drew the parting breath,
Gain'd was the victory over death,
 And *life* was ever there.

I felt as ne'er I had before,
I knew that I should sin no more;—
 And straight within my soul
There was a calm and holy peace,
A joy so true it ne'er *could* cease,
 A gentle, sweet control.

I knew that I was with my God,
Yet fear'd I not His chast'ning rod,
 Fear dwelleth not with love;—
I felt His presence ever nigh,
T'was bliss to live beneath His eye,
 I was in heav'n above!

I was so fill'd with holy awe,
I nothing heard and nothing saw;—
 Yet every power and thought
Was bent on that excess of light,
Absorb'd in fulness of delight,
 In Him whose face I sought.

But then a mortal veil was thrown
Upon me, and I was alone!
 My course was still to run.
I came from realms of endless day,
To see the dim and troubled ray
 Of the earth's mid-day sun.

But yet, methought, a fairer glow
Was shed on all things here below,—
Light from above was giv'n.
My Father's love dispell'd the gloom,
And made the Valley of the Tomb
Appear the Gate of Heaven.

PRAYER.

HOLY Father! I thank Thee for the glimpse of Heaven which I have this day enjoyed in Thy courts. I thank Thee for the communion of saints which I have shared. I thank Thee that I have tasted of the blessedness of Thy presence. May this day in Thy courts be one to help me onwards in the journey of life. May the streams of living water which I have drunk refresh my spirit to encounter the burning sand, the rugged stones, the fierce enemies within and without, I may have to battle with on my pilgrimage; and everywhere may the abiding pillar of Thy guiding presence be with me. Watch over me with Thy love, I pray Thee, this night; and whether I awake in this world or another may I be still with Thee. I ask these, and all blessings, in the name of Thy Beloved Son our Saviour. Amen.



MONDAY MORNING.

Matthew xiv., 20.—What lack I yet?

“IF thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” How little the young man understood the nature and comprehensiveness of the law of God is clear, from his enquiry, “Which?” The Pharisaic Rabbis taught their followers that if they singled out some one commandment, and scrupulously and uniformly discharged it, they should, thereby, compensate for many neglects and transgressions of the rest. The principle is a bad one; but it is only an extravagant statement of one of the most common sophisms of the spiritual life,—one by which men are continually influenced and fatally mislead,—one which applies to self-esteem, and makes it throw around the veil of self-delusion,—which leads to rest on modes of faith, on the punctual, frequent, and fervent discharge of religious duties on the one hand; or, on the other, on a rigid attention to the claims of justice, or on active efforts to promote attractive plans for human welfare, or on the exercise of compassion, while pride and envy and uncharitableness rule in the heart, or while Christian sobriety and piety have no place there; while, on the one hand, the claims of social or domestic duty, or of personal virtue, are lost sight of, or very imperfectly discharged; or,

on the other, the great principle of godliness is neglected, the regulation of the temper, and the internal spirit of the mind.

In all ages there has been a baneful disposition which, in some or other of its manifestations, we all more or less experience, "to tythe mint and anise and cummin, and neglect the weightier matters of the law,"—justice, mercy, and faithful obedience. In all ages it has been found easier to erect an idol for self-worship, than to humble the spirit; to give alms, than to exercise charity; to correct others, than to rule oneself; to burn incense in the censer of gold, than to offer up the affections of the soul; to sacrifice the costly burnt offering, than to present ourselves a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God; to build temples without, than to erect one within, to the Holy Being who is a spirit. And, in our own day, it is found easier to rest on the righteousness of Christ, than to practice the holiness of heart and life which he enjoins; to look for the kingdom of God without, than to seek it within; to assist in conducting the living waters to the minds of others and to distant regions, than to receive it permanently into our own hearts; to aid in promoting the freedom of the slave, than to free ourselves from the slavery of passion, of censoriousness, of selfishness, of pervading worldly mindedness, which sends forth its various entangling fibres and roots of covetousness, self-indulgence, conceit and vanity, the love of pleasure and the pride of life. The work within must accompany the work without to render this acceptable to God; yet, when the light of truth and duty is really burning in the heart, it is rarely, if ever, that it does not *obviously* contribute (effectually though not ostentatiously) to the well-being of others,

present or eternal, in promoting, in different ways and measures, the kingdom of righteousness and love; and happy, indeed, are those who, while their talents or situation in life give them the power to promote the welfare of multitudes, employ their power *faithfully* as a *trust*; and, at the same time, carry the principles which they desire to guide their means of usefulness into the regulation of their own hearts.

O THOU, to whose all-searching sight
The darkness shineth as the light!
Search, prove my heart; it pants for Thee,
O burst these bonds, and set it free!

If in this darksome wild I stray,
Be Thou my Light, be Thou my Way!
No foes, no terrors shall I fear,
Nor fraud, while Thou, my God, art near.

When rising floods my soul o'erflow,
When sinks my heart in waves of woe;
Do Thou Thy timely aid impart,
And raise my head, and cheer my heart.

My God! whene'er Thy steps I see,
Dauntless, untired, I'd follow Thee!
O let Thy hand support me still,
And lead me to Thy holy hill.

If rough and thorny be the way,
My strength proportion to my day;
'Till toil and grief and pain shall cease,
Where all is calm, and joy, and peace.

PRAYER.

O THOU Searcher of hearts ! Be pleased to impart a ray of Thy heavenly light to discover to me the evils and infirmities of my past life, that henceforth no secret sin may be undiscovered in my heart ; that, by examining my life and conversation by Thy law, as the rule and measure of my duty, I may discern the true state and condition of my soul ; and that, from a just sense of all my transgressions, I may be enabled, through the assistance of Thy grace, to forsake every evil way and disposition, and to turn my feet unto Thy testimonies. Make me careful in the examination of my own heart, and most severe against my own offences. Give me inward confidence to rely on Thy fatherly providence, that neither fear may deter me, nor any advantage turn me, from the path of truth. Let not the specious goodness of the end encourage me to the unlawfulness of the means, but let Thy word be the warrant to all my actions. Let me shun whatever is wrong, but never be induced to conceal falsely what wrong I have done. When censured, or my conduct misconstrued, enable me to check the eager spirit of self-vindication. Give me collectedness and discretion to guide me in unexpected difficulties. Quicken my conscience to reprove my past failures. Let my heart be in covenant with my lips, and let both my heart and my tongue be under the guidance of the law of truth, of guileless simplicity, and of godly sincerity. And let me so walk before Thee in a course of holy living, that I may finally be made a partaker of Thy mercy unto eternal life ; through Jesus Christ, our ever blessed Saviour. Amen.

MONDAY EVENING.

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John xv., 5.—For without me ye can do nothing.

THE case of the Apostles is our own case, with the exception only of the peculiarities of their situation and mission. Without Christ *we* can do nothing; nothing in the concerns and ways of our highest moral life; nothing in relation to those objects of faith and hope and duty which he came to render clear and sure to the spirits of men. Without him, the soul is left without its support and guide. Without him, the soul struggles, but accomplishes nothing; meditates, inquires, searches, but is made certain of nothing; pursues various ends, but arrives at nothing. Without “the true light” it gropes and wanders in the ancient darkness; without “the true bread,” it hungers and faints; without “the true vine,” it brings forth no fruit.

When we turn to an examination of ourselves and our religious state, it is then that the conviction is most forcibly impressed upon us, that we can do nothing without our Saviour. We arrive at our most intimate, consoling, and elevating knowledge of God the Father, through his Son Jesus Christ. We acquire our simplest, clearest, kindest,

and most practical views of duty, from him and his life. We learn from him distinctly what is the acceptable worship and service which man is required to render to his Maker. We know, through him and his resurrection, what we could not otherwise have known, whatever we might have hoped, that we are immortal, and that we shall live after death, and for ever. By him we are brought into connection with that bright community of angels and sainted spirits, whose voices we hear on earth by faith, cheering us in our journey, and inviting us to the enjoyment of their society and his own, everlastingly in heaven.

Christ is *my* companion and guide in the path of my mortal life, through all difficulties and danger, always ready and efficient with his counsel, sympathy, and assistance. Am I in doubt concerning some question of duty, some rule of conscience? I have only to refer to his word, or his example, and my course is plain. Am I in peril from some lurking and besetting temptation, almost irresistible from the appeals which it makes to my weaker nature? One glance at his pure countenance, one touch of his invigorating hand, and I am my better self again, and have strength to spurn the assaulter away. Have I neglected to seek my helper in season? have I wandered from the right way? and do I at length see and deplore my fault, confused and ashamed? I hear his voice, not repelling me by harsh accents, but gently accepting my repentance and inviting my return. Is my heart deeply pierced by disappointment or any grievous sorrow? or is my flesh troubled by racking pain? I look to the Man of Sorrows, to the suffering Lamb of God, to his bleeding temples, to his agonising cross; and his wounds are the healing of mine. Do I stand by the

bedside of a departing friend, feeling that I am wretched, and that, when the final breath is breathed, I shall be more wretched still, but striving to restrain my tears in the fear of disturbing the last moments of one I love? Christ is with me where I stand, assuring me that my friend will not die, but only sleep; and that I shall meet him again, and be parted from him no more. I bless the sacred accents, and my tears gather silently, and my bosom is calmed. And so when I come myself to the brink of the river, Christ will be with me then who has been with me always; and the warmth of his dear and glorious presence will dispel the chilly vapours; and he will lead me safely through. What, then, could I do without him? How can I live, how can I die without him?

Master! to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. Thou hast said we can do nothing without Thee. Son of God, it is true! Saviour of men, it is true! Thou art the vine, we are the branches. Our spiritual life is nourished and invigorated from thee; and if we bear fruit, it is because we abide in thee, and still receive the vital streams which flow from thee alone.

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How sweet the words, and how benignly spoken  
By him whose blessings age to age have blest:

"All ye who labour, and are heavy laden,  
"Come unto me, and I will give you rest!

"Come unto me, however great the burden,  
"Come unto me, I can its weight remove;

“And from these scenes of woe and war transport ye  
“To fields of blessedness, and peace, and love.

“Come unto me; a sweet and heavenly welcome  
“Waits for the weary, waits for the opprest;  
“Come unto me, ye pilgrims of earth's valley,  
“Come unto me, and I will give you rest.

“Come unto me, ye feeble and ye fainting,  
“Come unto me, dejected and distrest;  
“Weeping and wasted, troubled and tormented,  
“Come unto me, and I will give you rest.”

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## PRAYER.

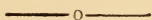
AGAIN, before I go to rest, would I commit myself to Thy care, O God, beseeching Thee to forgive me for all my sins, and to keep alive Thy grace in my heart; to cleanse me from all indolence, pride, harshness, and selfishness; and to give me the spirit of meekness, humility, firmness, and love. O Lord! keep Thyself present to me for ever, and perfect Thy strength in my weakness. Preserve me and mine this night, and strengthen us to bear whatever Thou shalt see fit to lay on us, whether pain, sickness, danger, or distress. So much sin in the world, and suffering! and then the thought of our own private life, so full of comforts, is very startling when we contrast it with the lot of millions whose portion is so full of distress and trouble! May we be kept humble



and zealous; and mayest Thou give us grace to labour in our generation for the good of our brethren and for Thy glory. Do Thou keep us by night and by day, and strengthen us to learn and to do Thy will. Do Thou keep our hearts tender when we feel better. Do Thou make us gentle and patient, yet active and zealous. How much good have we received at Thy hands! and shall we not receive evil? Let us not fall from Thee in any trial. O Lord, let us cherish a sober mind, to be ready to bear evenly and not sullenly. O Lord, reveal Thyself to us through Christ, which knowledge will make all suffering and trials easy. O Lord, may we join with all Thy people in Heaven and on earth, in offering up our prayer to Thee through our Lord Jesus Christ; and in saying, "Glory be to Thy most holy name for ever and ever." Amen.



## TUESDAY MORNING.



Romans xii., 12.—Continuing instant in prayer.

ITH a heart disposed to love, to fear, to trust, and to serve God, let me observe the objects in which he is more immediately blessing myself individually, and those connected with me, and consider the ordinary circumstances of every day; then let me reflect whether they ought not to excite in me those frequent secret upraisings of the heart to God which are a fulfilment of the command, "Pray without ceasing."

Have I a comfortable habitation? When I enter it, when I think of it, let me acknowledge Him from whose goodness I received it. Have I and my family health and abundance? Let us rejoice in it as the gift of God. Do I retain the soundness of my faculties? What gratitude do I owe for their preservation! Am I blessed with the intercourse of friendship and love? Let me thank Him who gave me friends and enables me to enjoy them. Have I children on whom I look with mingled delight and solicitude? Let me acknowledge the goodness of God, and look up for His guidance and blessing, that I

may be enabled to rear them to His glory. Can I pursue my daily labour? Let me thank the God of my strength. Am I feeble, or suffering under any disease? Let me be strong in faith, and endure as seeing Him who is invisible. Have I escaped any danger? I would bless my Preserver. Has any one whom I love been rescued from peril? Let me acknowledge the hand that saved him. Am I able to minister to the necessities of others? Let me praise Him who has given me the means and the disposition. Do I see the deaf, the blind, the lame, and the diseased, and think, with joy, that I am in health and can see, and hear, and move where I will without pain? Let my joy be that of gratitude; and, with my sympathies for those that suffer, let my thanksgiving for myself ascend to Heaven. Do I enjoy rest after fatigue; and do my hours pass in tranquil pleasure? Let me thank God for this season of rest and peace. Am I angry with another? Let my prayer arise, "Forgive me my trespasses, as I forgive others." Am I oppressed with the affairs of a family or of business? Remembering that I must give an account to God, let me ask if they are ordered according to His will. Am I tempted to indulge any bad passion, or doubting concerning any dispositions or conduct? Let me remember that the eye of God is upon me, and seek from Him grace and guidance. Am I sensible of having wasted my time or abused any talent; of having spoken rashly or acted unkindly? Let me ask God to guard me in future temptations. Do I feel a good disposition, and have I overcome a trial of my faith and patience? Let me pray to God to strengthen what is right, and thank Him who has hitherto made me victorious.

By thus habitually looking to God; acknowledging Him in all circumstances and events; committing myself to Him, and seeking His approbation in all my dispositions, indulgences and pursuits, shall I make every action an act of devotion, and thus be "Instant in prayer."

To prayer, to prayer; for the morning breaks,  
And earth in her Maker's smile awakes,  
His light is on all below and above,  
The light of gladness and life and love.  
O then, on the breath of this early air,  
Send up the incense of grateful prayer.

To prayer; for the glorious sun is gone,  
And the gathering darkness of night comes on,  
Like a curtain from God's kind hand it flows  
To shade the couch where His children repose.  
Then kneel while the watching stars are bright,  
And give your last thoughts to the Guardian of night.

To prayer; for the day that God hath blest  
Comes tranquilly on with its welcome rest.  
It speaks of creation's early bloom:  
It speaks of the Prince who burst the tomb.  
Then summon the spirit's exalted powers,  
And devote to heaven the hallow'd hours.

There are smiles and tears in the mother's eyes,  
For her new-born infant beside her lies.  
O hour of bliss! when the heart o'erflows  
With a rapture a mother only knows.  
Let it gush forth in words of fervent prayer,  
Let it swell up to heaven for her precious care.

There are smiles and tears in that gathering band  
Where the heart is pledged with the trembling hand.



What trying thoughts in her bosom swell,  
As the bride bids parent and home farewell!  
Kneel down by the side of the tearful fair,  
And strengthen the perilous hour with prayer.

Kneel down by the dying sinner's side,  
And pray for his soul through him that died.  
Large drops of anguish are thick on his brow;  
O what is earth and its pleasures now?  
And what shall assuage his dark despair  
But the penitent cry of humble prayer?

Kneel down at the couch of departing faith  
And hear the last words the believer saith.  
He has bidden adieu to his earthly friends;  
There is peace in his eye that upward bends;  
There is peace in his calm, confiding air;  
For his last thoughts are God's, his last words prayer.

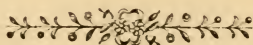
The voice of prayer at the sable bier!  
A voice to sustain, to soothe and to cheer.  
It commends the spirit to God who gave;  
It lifts the thoughts from the cold, dark grave;  
It points to the glory where he shall reign  
Who whispered "Thy brother shall rise again."

The voice of prayer in the world of bliss!  
But gladder, fairer, than rose from this.  
The ransomed shout to their glorious King,  
Where no sorrow shades the soul as they sing;  
But a sinless, joyous song they raise;  
And their voice of prayer is eternal praise.

Awake! awake! gird up thy strength  
To join that holy band at length.  
To Him who unceasing love displays,  
Whom the powers of heaven unceasing praise;  
To Him let thy heart and thy powers be given;  
For a life of prayer is a life of heaven!

## PRAYER.

O BLESSED Father! How can I sufficiently thank Thee for this great privilege,—that Thou permittest, nay invitest, Thy frail children of the dust to approach Thee in prayer, to pour out their wants before Thee in perfect confidence. Father! my wants are all known unto Thee! I know not what is best for me; I almost fear to ask Thee for any earthly thing least I should be asking a curse instead of a blessing; but this,—this only would I pray for,—that Thou wouldst grant me, according to the riches of Thy glory, to be strengthened with might by Thy Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in my heart by faith; that thus, being rooted and grounded in love, I may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth and length, depth and height, and to know what is the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, so that I may be filled with Thy fulness. Thou, O Father, art able to do exceeding abundantly above all that I ask or think, by Thy power that worketh in us; for Thine is eternal love and wisdom and power from eternity, throughout all ages, and world without end. O grant this my prayer, O Father! Amen.



## TUESDAY EVENING.

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Psalm xviii., 1.—I will love Thee, O Lord my strength.

**W**HO are they that love the Lord? To love Him truly we must first believe that He loveth us. We feel His power; we trace everywhere His wisdom; we must also be fully assured of His love to each creature of His hand. And this assurance of His love must not be one of the understanding merely. It must be engrafted into every faculty of our nature; it must entwine itself with every affection of our heart; it must be evident to us in everything that is around us. When we, then, have truly faith in the love of God, ought it not to produce a return of love? Can we do otherwise than surrender our souls to that love which is ever encircling us, even when we know it not? Earthly affection is very precious. We feel that love is the only meet return we can make for love, here below; yet how poor is the love that is offered us here, in comparison with that which our Heavenly Father freely bestows upon us! What a return should we make to Him!

They that love the Lord, then, are those who, having a full confidence in His wisdom and power, have also a

perfect assurance of His unbounded, unchanging love for us, which so blends itself with our very souls, that we devote to Him, as a faint return, every thought, every wish, every affection; that we withhold from Him no purpose, no aspiration, no desire; that we lay our hopes and fears all before Him; that love to Him influences all our actions; in fine, that we offer to Him the purest devotion of love of which our souls are capable.

Now such must have great peace. Being convinced of the power and wisdom of the Lord, "their strength," they know that everything is ordered by Him, and must be so ordered as to accomplish the ends which He has in view; and, being convinced of His love, they are assured that what He has willed must be for the well-being of His creatures. Now, peace results from this harmony of wisdom, power and love, for there can enter into it no discordant element. In proportion, then, as our love to God is perfect, we shall fully enter into His designs, and feel a calm and happy sympathy with all that He doeth,—which is peace.

What causes the want of peace among men in general, and, above all, in our own hearts? It is because we separate ourselves from God, and then all is discordant. We set up our own wills as the standard of our desires; and then they are crossed, and we are fretted, and seek to satisfy them everywhere but in the only true source. Our souls are out of harmony with creation, with the moral and spiritual world; and thus everything jars against them.

But let the love of God reign within us; let it pervade all our motives and excite all our actions; let it be shed round all that befalls us, or rather let us open our eyes to



see it, for it is ever there,—we shall have tranquillity, and even happiness, under every dispensation of providence; we shall not be wearying ourselves out with impatient longings for that which it is not intended that we should have; but we shall find enjoyment in the present duties and employments which are before us; and, above all, our souls will be filled more and more with that peace of God which He has vouchsafed here below to those that love Him, and which is a glimpse and foretaste of that which will be perfect above.

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THOU hidden love of God, whose height,  
Whose depth, unfathom'd, no man knows!  
I see from far Thy beauteous light;  
Inly I sigh for Thy repose;  
Then shall my heart from care be free,  
When it hath found repose in Thee.

Father! Thy sovereign aid impart  
To save me from low-thoughted care!  
Chase this self-will through all my heart,  
Through all its latent mazes there:  
Make me Thy duteous child, that I  
May raise to Thee a trustful cry.

Each moment draw from earth away  
My heart that lowly waits Thy call!  
Speak to my inmost soul and say,  
“I am thy life, thy God, thy all!”  
Thy love to reach, Thy voice to hear,  
Thy power to feel be all my prayer.

## PRAYER.

GIVE me, O Lord, Thy Holy Spirit ; that my understanding and all my faculties may be resigned to the discipline and doctrine of our Saviour. Let my faith be the parent of a good life ; a strong shield to repel the assaults of sin ; the source of a holy hope, of modest desires, of love and confidence in Thee, and a never failing charity to all men. Whatever spiritual evils are yet remaining in my heart, direct me to the knowledge of them, and the proper means of removing them. Whenever I wander from Thee, show me my error, though it should be by fatherly correction : let pain or sorrow, if needful, lead me home ; but never, oh never, leave me to myself. Carry me and mine still forward, O Heavenly Father, by all the methods of Thy providence and grace, till we are prepared for that world, where we shall no longer bewail the darkness of our understandings and disorders or wanderings of our hearts, but where we shall love Thee entirely, rejoice in Thee triumphantly, and celebrate Thy praises to all eternity, in the presence of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.



## WEDNESDAY MORNING.

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Psalm xxiii., 4.—Though I walk through the Valley  
of the shadow of Death, I will fear no evil.

OMPELLED, as even the most spiritually minded are, to bend their attention to the functions and feelings of the bodily frame,—dependent, as we all are, upon their healthy condition, not only for physical comfort, but for the proper exercise of our mental powers,—it is not to be wondered at that the thoughts should sometimes wander to a period when this watchfulness will be no more needed, when the most anxious care will no longer avail to prevent the vital flame from being extinguished. The stiffening of the limbs, once so full of activity,—the closing in utter darkness of the eyes, once the inlet of so much light and beauty,—the muteness of the lips, so long vocal with thought and feeling,—the coldness, the gloom, the stillness of the tomb,—all will occasionally intrude themselves on the imagination, and excite apprehensions that these fearful changes must be preceded by mental and bodily sufferings of an appalling nature.

If, however, we now and then glance at this picture, it

is not one worthy of being *dwelt* upon by the Christian ; it is not a fit theme for the preacher or the poet to press upon the Christian's consideration.

Death is no accident of our being, it is an appointment of our Heavenly Father. God has taken this event into His immediate charge, and we may certainly know that whatever may be the terrors of its appearance, it is appointed in wisdom and in love. It is appointed by the same Being who opens our eyes upon the glories of this marvellous world, and is the Author of all the happiness we have ever enjoyed. A wise dispensation, ordered by a Benevolent Creator, does not deserve to be figured as an "enemy of the human race." At whatever season, in whatever mode death reaches us, it cannot come without the cognizance of that knowledge which precludes the supposition of error, or of that mercy on which every doubt and every sorrow may lean. The event of death is unalterably the appointment of our Father in Heaven equally with His kindest and brightest dispensations.

Ignorant as we are, through the merciful arrangement of Providence, of the time and manner of our dissolution, we shall be unwise to speculate upon that wherein we cannot arrive at any reasonable and satisfactory conclusion. Experience shows that death is usually attended with less suffering than has been dreaded. The most painful diseases are not the most fatal ones, and they who recover often suffer more than those who die. Death is often painless, often instantaneous.

Nor let us shudder at the decay of our bodily organs when the liberated spirit has no longer need of their aid. The seed perishes in the earth while the young plant is rising into new existence.



And why should the long sleep of death appal us? Whether the change from death to life be immediate, or the unconscious repose be that of thousands of years, to him that "falls asleep" there will be no sensible interval between death and resurrection,—the night of dissolution will be instantly succeeded by the dawn of eternity.

And in that eternity to what a glorious scene will the faithful Christian awake! Re-united with the dearest objects of his earthly regards in a state where sorrow and sin, and pain and death, will be known no more,—in fellowship with the wise and good of all who have existed in every period of the world,—in the society of that blessed Saviour who has sanctified the dark mansions of the tomb to all his followers,—and admitted to more intimate communion with his Heavenly Father,—how happy and how favoured will be his exaltation! how wise, how merciful, will he regard that appointment which conducted him through the portals of the tomb to such felicity!

"When the sun of my life sets behind the dark mountains, and that night has come to me which comes to all, I will not be depressed by its deepening shadows; I will not dread its gathering terrors; I will not shrink from its narrow bed." "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."

O CHRISTIAN! to thy vows be true;  
Be firm in faith,—in hope be brave:  
Contemplate not with coward view  
The dying hour, the silent grave.

Chase from thy thoughts these grovelling fears:  
On nobler prospects fix *thy* gaze;  
Turn from the vale of night and tears  
To heavenly scenes, to deathless days.

*Thy* faith, *thy* hope can pierce the skies:  
There, radiant with a light divine,  
The loved, the pure, the just, the wise,  
In holy, happy concourse join.

There, freed from earth's oppressive load,—  
From all that grieves,—from all that taints,  
Behold them in their bright abode,  
A blest "Communion of the Saints."

In nearer intercourse with God.—  
Rejoicing in their Saviour's love.—  
They little heed the gloomy road  
Which led them to their bliss above.

Sweet their employment now to trace  
The mysteries that perplexed them here;  
No clouds now veil the Throne of Grace.  
All that was dark is bright and clear.

Christian, oh! fear not life's last breath:  
To thee a favoured lot is given:  
The pang that dims thy eyes with death,  
Unseals them for thy birth in heaven.

## P R A Y E R .

O ALMIGHTY Father! Fill my soul with so deep a sense of the excellency of things spiritual, that, my affections being weaned from the false allurements of sin, I may, with the prudence of a holy discipline and governed desires, with clear resolutions and a free spirit, have my conversation heavenward. May I use Thy creatures soberly and temperately, that my spirit may not be rendered unapt for the performance of duty; or my body helpless; or my affections sensual and unholy. May no impure thoughts pollute the soul which Thou hast sanctified; no unclean words deprave the tongue which Thou hast commanded to be the organ of Thy praise; no unholy or unchaste actions defile the body, which Thou hast appointed to be the temple of Thy Spirit. And when I have done and suffered Thy will here upon earth, with sincerity, though alas! with many imperfections; when I have finished my earthly course, and am drawing near to the gates of death; may no unrepented sins rise up to my remembrance and set themselves in array against me, and may my unallowed defects and imperfections, while they render me humble, not deprive me of peace and hope. Whenever I die may I die in the Lord, and be finally received, with all dear unto me, into those mansions where the sun shall no more go down, nor the moon withdraw its light; where the Lord shall be our everlasting light, and the days of mourning shall be ended. Grant this, I pray Thee, through Thine infinite mercy in Christ Jesus. Amen.

## WEDNESDAY EVENING.

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Psalm lxxviii., 25.—Man did eat angels' food.

RULY was it angels' food which fed those children of promise in their long wanderings to the earthly Canaan! They were following the pillar of God's providence, and His hand showered down on them from heaven pure nourishment; He brought them meat on the wings of the wind; He drew for them, from the barren rock, a stream of living water. Nor then alone did the Father of all provide for His children "angels' food." He made the ravens His messengers to His faithful servant, to carry him bread; He fed not only him, but that faithful woman who had shared with him her last morsel; He did not desert Elijah when, alone in the wilderness, his body was weak, his faith fainting, and he requested for himself that he might die, but sent His angel to him with food, in the strength of which he went forty days. How frequently was that chosen nation reminded,—and we, through it, may be so too,—that our Heavenly "Father knoweth that we have need of these things;" that we not only have from Him our daily bread, but that if we are in the path He has commanded, when that fails He will give us bread from heaven.

And did he who came into this world to raise our hopes beyond it; did he, the Holy One of God, forbid us to seek



even the food which perisheth? He himself felt pity for the multitude, when they were fainting with hunger in the desert; and on two separate occasions, having first given thanks to the Father, he break to them bread which earth had not produced. After he had himself put off mortality, when his "children" told him that they had no meat, the waves, at his command, bare them food, and, for the last time, he brake unto them.

The age of miracles is past; man *has* eaten "angels' food," and has received nourishment for the body, in a direct and evident manner, from the hand of God; we require no longer supernatural proofs to convince us, that "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him;" we have the written record, the sure word of testimony abiding with us. It is *He* who still giveth us our daily bread; the period of His parental care of us is not passed; man still eateth "angels' food."

But there is a holier, a more enduring bread,—that which is more truly "angels' food,"—the bread from Heaven which shall never perish. And still it is from our Father that we have this blessed food. He sent His well-beloved Son into the world that, through him, we might receive the bread of life; that from him we might draw of that pure well, which shall supply us, not only in our wanderings in this wilderness, but when we reach the Heavenly Canaan.

O may we, the children of His love and grace, draw with joy from the wells of salvation; may we eat with thankfulness the bread that the Saviour has broken to us; may we receive, with grateful hearts, the "angels' food" that is given us here below, that we may share it with glorified spirits above, in the presence of our Father!

O HAND of bounty, largely spread,  
By whom our every want is fed!  
Whate'er we touch, or taste, or see,  
We owe them all, O Lord, to Thee;  
The corn, the oil, the purple wine,  
Are all Thy gifts, and only Thine!

The bread Messiah multiplied,  
The stream his word to nectar dyed,  
The stormy wind, the whelming flood,  
That silent at his mandate stood;—  
How well they knew Thy voice divine,  
Whose works they were, and only Thine!

Though now no more on earth we trace  
Such footsteps of celestial grace,  
Obedient to Thy word and will,  
We seek Thy daily mercy still;  
Its blessed beams around us shine,  
And Thine we are, and only Thine.

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### PRAYER.

THOU, most tender Father, hast abundantly fulfilled all Thy promises to us. Thou hast been waiting to be gracious, and hast filled our scanty vessels with the sweet tokens of Thy presence. If we have not been satisfied, ours is the false want that, in Thy love, Thou has not seen fit to gratify. If we have not been holy, ours was the sin that chained us to ourselves, when Thou wouldest have

had us walk with Thee and be perfect in following Thy will. Father, I have not loved Thee as I ought, and thus I have found Thy law burdensome. Oh! burst the fetters of self-love that have enchained my soul. May I embrace the new commandment of Thy Son with pure affection, and henceforth find the only delight of my life in Thy loving service. To Thy never-ceasing care I commit myself this night. Watch over me, and all I love, and the whole family of man, in the helpless hours of sleep: and watch over us, when we need Thy help as much, in the wakeful hours of duty. And so guide us through the scenes of this lower state, that we may reach the heaven of purity and love in the eternal home; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



## THURSDAY MORNING.

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Mark iv., 39.—And he arose and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, "Peace, be still!" and the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

**J**ESUS is no longer by our side, in bodily presence, to command the elements. The external world seems only incidentally to confess his presence. Yet amid the tempests of life let us still feel our Saviour near. Let us have faith. It is well for us not to doubt; still if we doubt, let us pray, and doubt shall be turned to conviction. Christ still works wonders. Let us pray the Father; and whatever we ask according to His will, the spirit of our Lord will enable us to perform. "Peace, be still!" shall be the answer to our troubled spirits. When Jesus stilled the storm, terror and awe filled the minds of beholders; but no alarm shall follow his workings now. Peace shall not always be without, but there shall be tranquillity within. Yet there shall be often peace without. When the love of God rules in our hearts, we shall be able to control the violence of others. The storms of passion may rage around us; our ears may be harassed with sounds of tumult and of passion. If we had faith we could do something to quell



the tempest. Our soft answers should turn away wrath; we, who ruled our spirits, should be stronger than the mighty; we should return good for evil, till the face of the world became changed. O! that we could know, even we, at least in this our day, the things that make for our peace.

But we must have strength from within if we are to operate successfully on that which is without. The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, must keep our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ. We are not to be troubled, nor to be afraid, but to believe on the Father and the Son.

Ah! how much do we need this faith, even when we think we need it least. If we trust to our own strength, we find that it is weak as the frail vessel which offers but a plank to keep off destruction. We sail hopefully on the smooth waters; we forget that they are deep as well as smooth. We think that our principles are firm, and that they will float us safely over the sea of life. We do not mark when they are giving way; that temptation, like the deceitful waters, is stealing through them; that our bark is gradually filling; that even, whilst all is serene above and beneath us, we may be sinking in the flood of pleasure, and be dead, while we seem to live. Or we may trust to the cloudless sky, and know not that the strong winds of passion, which are now allayed, may rise up again, and, opposing the current of duty, raise a tempest around us; that the moon may withdraw its shining, and the stars refuse their lustre; that clouds may blacken the atmosphere of our souls, and the light of conscience be overcast. Little do we know ourselves when all is calm around us! Well is it for us if Christ is always our com-

panion, that we may in the time of peril find him our aid; that he may say to the stormy waves "Peace, be still!"

There is a storm which all must pass through; the black clouds of sickness will gather round us, or the blasts of violence will dash our vessel on the rock. Let us not fear. We may sink, but we shall be borne in safety through the waves; we shall be unconscious, but we shall first hear the soft, but commanding words, "Peace, be still!" We shall wake and find ourselves at our desired haven. Our feet shall rest on the shore where "everlasting spring abides, and never-withering flowers." We shall look back on the wreck of our earthly hopes without a sigh. We shall be where storms can agitate no more; where there is no briny sea, but pure fountains of the waters of life; where there shall be no winds, but the blessed breath of heaven; no clouds, but the clouds of glory that convey to the enraptured sight the fulness of divine love. Yet still the loved voice which hushed the tempest will be heard to whisper, "Peace, peace! not as the world giveth, give I unto you!"

FEAR was within the tossing bark,  
When stormy winds grew loud,  
And waves came rolling high and dark,  
And the tall mast was bowed.

And men stood breathless in their dread,  
And baffled in their skill;  
But One was there, who rose and said  
To the wild sea—"Be still!"

And the wind ceased,—it ceased!—that word  
Passed through the gloomy sky;  
The troubled billows knew their Lord,  
And fell beneath his eye.

And slumber settled on the deep,  
And silence on the blast;  
They sank, as flowers that fold to sleep  
When sultry day is past.

O! thou, that in its wildest hour  
Didst rule the tempest's mood,  
Send thy meek spirit forth in power,  
Soft on our souls to brood!

Thou that didst bow the billow's pride  
Thy mandate to fulfil!  
O speak to passion's raging tide,  
Speak, and say "*Peace, be still!*"

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## PRAYER.

O! THOU eternal God. Thou art without variableness and shadow of turning. Thou makest the earthquake, and the storm, and the raging sea; yet Thou rearest and workest in peace which passeth understanding. And canst Thou give me Thy peace, O God? All things are possible to Thee. Wilt Thou give me of Thy peace? In the sleep from which Thou hast raised me, there was peace; in the death to which Thou wilt bring me, there is peace; but now, this day, in the work of life, in its troubles, in its

passions, hast Thou peace for me? O! Father, there is no peace for the wicked; there is no peace for me in myself; conscience offers me no rest, my desires give me no repose, my duties urge me onward, and passions are strong against me, and my dearest friends cannot always tranquillize me, and those whom I love best may move the very depths within me. Give me of Thy peace. Take me not out of the storm, if it pleases Thee to let the fierce winds assail me; land me not on the safe shore, if Thou wouldest still keep me on the troubled waters; but tranquillize my restless spirit, calm my troubled soul, and give me to feel myself Thy child, my Father. I am safe in Thee, my God. Thou wilt never leave me nor forsake me. Thou wilt protect me where Thou dost lead me, and canst keep in perfect peace those whose souls are stayed on Thee, because they trust in Thee. And now may I love Thee more, and do the things that please Thee, that Thy Son may love me, and that he and Thou may be manifest unto me, in the storm and in the sunshine, in the voyage of life and the haven of eternity. Amen.





## THURSDAY EVENING.

—o—

John xi., 28.—The Master is come, and calleth for thee.



BLESSED words these for the sorrowing, loving Mary! No wonder that she “arose quickly, and came unto him.” They who were mourning with her, and had seen the absorbing anguish of her soul, thought that she was going to the grave to weep there. They saw her outward grief; they knew not her inward joy; she was obeying the summons to him “who had the words of eternal life.”

Yet the same tender, half-reproachful complaint escaped her, as she threw herself at the feet of her beloved Lord, that had been uttered by Martha:—“If thou hadst been here, my brother had not died!” She knew his love for the departed, and she was, doubtless, fully assured, as her sister was, that whatsoever he should ask of God, God would give it him. But the feelings of nature for a short time prevailed over her faith, and the compassionate Saviour did not chide them.

When we have lost, by death, a beloved friend, do we linger weeping round the grave which holds only the perishing mortal covering, or do we listen to the voice which is calling us also, and go unto him who is the resur-

rection and the life? Though tears will flow, do we, even while they are gushing in sad abundance, throw ourselves at our Saviour's feet and listen to his words, and thence gather strength to go *with him* "even to the spot where the dead is laid?" If we do, we shall no longer find it a place of deep mourning and mysterious dread; immortal flowers of ever-growing beauty will be springing from it, and rays of eternal hope will be shedding a glorious halo around it. We shall not, indeed, as Mary did, see the stone removed, and the beloved one reappear in that mortal form which would again subject him to the trials and sufferings which for him have been terminated; but the eye of faith will behold him rising, clad in the heavenly raiment of the sons of God, and his spirit will seem to come and make its abode with us, and comfort us in our sojourning here.

Yes, beloved Master! may we ever listen to thy voice when it calls us! And may we ever hear it calling us, with thy accents of tender entreaty to the prodigal, to "arise and go to his Father;" of encouragement to the penitent, laden and oppressed with the heavy burden of his sins; of sympathy and comfort to the mourner, and of blessed promise to his faithful followers:—"In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also."

SINNER! the Master is come!

Wilt thou not list to his voice?

Gently he calleth thee home,

O let his way be thy choice!—

Then haste, Sinner, haste, for the Saviour is here!  
He loves thee, he calls thee, thou needest not fear!

Penitent, come! for thy sighs,

Thy tears shall be all wip'd away;—

“Thy sins are forgiven,”—then rise,

Thy darkness is turned to day;

Thy Father hath sent thee His well-belov'd Son,  
To call thee to bliss when thy race is well run.

Mourner! the Master is here;

Haste thee with him to the grave:—

Tho' warm flows the fast-gushing tear,

Thou knowest his power to save.

Thou knowest through him that the joy shall be given,  
Of being with thy lov'd one for ever in Heaven.

Christian! thy Master is come,

He knows all thy faith and thy love;

He calls thee on high to thy home,

His Father's blest mansions above:

The world is o'ercome, and thy trials are o'er,  
From the house of thy God thou art parted no more.

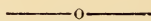
## P R A Y E R.

O FATHER! Thou hast called me unto Thee by the heavenly voice of Thy beloved Son. I thank Thee, I bless Thee, for that call; I would arise quickly and come unto Thee. Not to the grave, O! Father, would I go, even though Thou hast laid there my best beloved. I would go to the Saviour, and hear his words of everlasting life, and with him lift my spirit to Thee, in Whom alone is life. Nor, O! Father, need I any longer fear to approach Thee, though weighed down with a deep consciousness of my sins; for Thou knowest my thoughts even afar off, Thou beholdest the first yearnings of the wandering spirit towards Thee; Thou callest me home even while I hardly dare to raise my eyes unto Thee, whence alone cometh my help. O Father! Thou knowest all my weakness, all my wants, all my sins, all my sorrows. O! strengthen and deliver me, so that I may be in the end more than conqueror, through him that died for us to bring us to Thee. In him may I be found, living, dying, and for ever, O Father! Amen.





## FRIDAY MORNING.



Philippians 1., 12.—But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel.

HUS spoke the Apostle who was ready either to be full or to suffer need ; to depart and be with Christ, or to remain in the flesh amid toils and dangers, stripes, imprisonment, and trials of every kind ; to be all, and to do all, so that he might win Christ, and be found in him,—so that he might strengthen the joy and faith of his brethren in the Lord. Here he was in bonds, in the seat of learning and idolatry, far from his churches, after having been detained in prison for two years, in apparent inaction, by an avaricious, wicked, and ignorant governor, and then exposed to the dangers of shipwreck. Even now there were not wanting those who strove to add affliction to his bonds, by preaching Christ in contention and strife ; but that Christ was preached did he rejoice, and he was supported under all by the firm conviction that *all* things, even those which appeared most opposed to his spiritual usefulness, turned out rather for the furtherance of the gospel.

These things are written for our edification, nor must we neglect to mark the hand of God guiding all aright in our humble spheres, as well as in that more important one of the Apostle, which, as a city set on a hill, could not be hidden. It may be that our souls are kindled with a spark of that flame which warmed the heart of St. Paul with gratitude to God, even the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ; and which incited him to sacrifice all to the glorious and holy duty of calling his fellow-mortals to be heirs with him of the same promises. We may desire to devote our lives, as he did, to the good of our fellow creatures, to help to raise them from sin and misery to repentance and blessedness; but our hands appear to be holden, and our time engrossed by other occupations apparently less important, at any rate less congenial to the ardent longings of our souls. Let us be assured that this is for the furtherance of the gospel; if there were need of us we should be called, and a way opened to us. It may be that we see for ourselves or our friends an apparent blessing at hand, which we think would greatly contribute to our own happiness and usefulness, or that of others; yet the object of our desire is taken from us just as it seemed placed in our reach;—this also is for the furtherance of the gospel,—perhaps its furtherance in our own hearts. Or, it may be, as St. Paul, we are persecuted on every side,—we are cast down and see none to help us;—let our faith, like his, be strong;—we shall find that we are not forsaken, and that our tears will be a holy nutriment to the gospel seed.

But how was it that in St. Paul's case his calamities did turn out to the furtherance of the gospel? Because he knew that *all* was appointed for him by One who could

not err, and, therefore, received as a talent *whatever* befel him. Was he separated, in bodily presence, from his churches? His letters to them made him present in spirit, not only with them, but with others in all times and places, who receive with gratitude these epistles written with his own hand, and thus hold blessed communion with him here, in the hope of meeting him in the presence of the Lord. Was his heart grieved by the backsliding of those who were his spiritual children, and towards whom he yearned with an affection greater even than that of an earthly parent? His tender rebukes, his solemn warnings, his earnest exhortations, warmed with unbounded love, love of immortal souls,—these were called forth by his very sorrow; and to us, in these remote ages, are most profitable to awaken, to exhort, to comfort. Was he forcibly carried away from that Jerusalem which presented such a field of usefulness among the learned and powerful of the Jews? His course was guided by an Almighty hand to the seat of learning and power in the Heathen world, where his vigorous and highly-cultivated mind was peculiarly calculated to act on the wise of the earth. Was he even then in bonds? Those very bonds were made known in the palace, and converted many.

Thus with him, who had *devoted his heart and soul* to the service of his Lord, did *all* things turn out to the furtherance of the gospel.

Shall we not follow in his footsteps?

GIVE to the winds thy fears;  
Hope and be undismay'd;  
God hears thy sighs, and counts thy tears,  
God shall lift up thy head.  
Through waves, through clouds and storms,  
He gently clears thy way:  
Wait thou His time; so shall the night  
Soon end in joyous day.

He everywhere hath way,  
And all things serve His might;  
His every act pure blessing is;  
His paths unsullied light.  
When He makes bare His arm,  
What shall His work withstand?  
When He His people's cause defends,  
Who, who shall stay His hand?

Leave to His sovereign sway,  
To choose and to command;  
With wonder fill'd, thou then shalt own  
How wise, how strong His hand.  
Thou comprehend'st Him not:  
Yet earth and heaven tell,  
God sits as sovereign on the throne;  
He ruleth all things well.

Thou see'st our weakness, Lord!  
Our hearts are known to Thee;  
O lift Thou up the sinking hand,  
Confirm the feeble knee!  
Let me, in life and death,  
Boldly Thy truth declare;  
And publish, with my latest breath,  
Thy love, and guardian care.



## P R A Y E R.

DIRECT me, Heavenly Father, to the right and faithful improvement of all the aids Thou hast afforded for purifying and perfecting my nature. Teach me to understand clearly, to believe firmly, to value justly, and to comply with sincerely, that last and bright revelation Thou hast given through Thy beloved Son. Mortify in me all proud thoughts and vain opinions of myself. Let me go before my brethren in nothing but in striving to do them honour and to give Thee glory. Never let me seek my own praise, nor unduly delight in it when offered ; but may I learn of my Saviour to be meek and lowly in heart, and thus find rest unto my soul. Prepare and fit me for every condition and for every change ; but especially for the last and greatest change. Strengthen my faith in the time of sickness and trial. Suffer me not, through pain of body or weakness of mind, to let go my trust and confidence in Thee. May I so pass through the remaining days of life that, when I come to the day of death, I may have nothing to do but to die ; and may I be enabled to commit myself to Thee, with a peaceful hope in Thy mercy unto eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.



## FRIDAY EVENING.

—o—

Luke x., 21.—Jesus rejoiced in spirit and said, “I thank Thee, O Father.”



Y Father, *I* would thank Thee for all Thy mercies to me.

When the hand of sorrow is upon us, then we are led to Thee as the only comforter; when dangers encompass us round, we fly to Thee as the only rock of refuge; when sickness and death are near, we say, “Father, if it be possible, remove this bitter cup from me.” But, O! my Father, let me not be drawn to seek communion with Thee by affliction only; let me not offer to Thee only the perplexity and sadness of my soul; let its joys be shared with Thee; and when I rejoice in spirit let my first utterance be, “Father, I thank Thee.”

Thou art the giver of every good and perfect gift; all my springs of comfort and happiness have their source in Thee alone; and to Thee shall the homage of my praise arise daily for all my many temporal mercies. But it is when my *spirit* is free from care and sorrow; when its joy is shed around on all; when it gives brightness to gloom, and love to sorrow; when it can in faith spread the beauty

of Thy presence over the seeming deformity of the world ; when all things then minister to its happiness, as they do at other times to its mourning ; it is then, O ! my Father, that I need not to come to Thee, for I feel that Thou art already with me ; that Thou only can'st know my happiness, since it proceeds directly from Thee : then, while my lips utter, " Father, I thank Thee," would I offer to Thee the holy sacrifice of a loving and happy soul.

They are blessed moments when my spirit can thus rejoice in my God ! They give me a foretaste of that time when all shall be joy unspeakable, and when praise will be the atmosphere of the soul. Shall they pass and leave no trace behind ? Sorrow leaves deep marks of its presence, and long tinges, with a sombre hue, the world around. But when I have rejoiced in spirit, shall the holy period vanish for ever ? O may every hour of blessed communion with God make me more united with Him ! May it shed its holy influence over all I think and say and do ! May it diffuse a pure light on all things, and make me " rejoice evermore."

" Bless the Lord, O my soul, and *all* that is *within* me bless His holy name !"

My God! Thy boundless love I praise;  
How bright on high its glories blaze,  
How sweetly bloom below!  
It streams from Thy eternal throne,  
Through heaven its joys for ever run,  
And o'er the earth they flow.

It robes in cheerful green the ground,  
And pours its flow'ry beauties round,  
Whose sweets perfume the gale;  
Its bounties richly spread the plain,  
The blushing fruit, the golden grain,  
And smile on every vale.

But in Thy gospel see it shine  
With grace and glory more divine,  
Proclaiming sins forgiven;  
There Faith, bright cherub, points the way  
To realms of everlasting day,  
And opens all her heav'n.

Then let the love that makes me blest,  
With cheerful praise inspire my breast,  
And ardent gratitude;  
And all my thoughts and passions tend  
To Thee, my Father and my Friend,  
My soul's eternal good.

Dart from Thine own celestial flame  
One vivid beam, to warm my frame  
With kindred energy;  
Mark Thine own image on my mind,  
And teach me to be good and kind,  
And love and bless like Thee.



## P R A Y E R.

O THOU Father of mercies and God of all consolation! I would present unto Thee my humble tribute of praise for Thy glorious declarations to mankind in the Gospel of Thy Son Jesus. Blessed, for ever blessed, be Thy name, O Thou God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that by his resurrection from the dead, Thou hast begotten us again to a lively hope of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away; that we are enabled to look beyond this world of sin, of sorrow, and of death, to a world where all shall be eternally and unchangeably happy, who have here obeyed Thy holy will. O Heavenly Father, what thanks do I owe Thee for Thy rich and unmerited blessings. May my soul be filled with a lively sense of them, and may I manifest the sincerity of my gratitude by a heart sincerely devoted to Thy service. In humble submission to Thy will I implore for myself, and those dear to me, health and strength to discharge the duties which Thou hast assigned for us: but above all, I pray that I may rightly improve all Thy dispensations, learn to regard even afflictions as merciful, and from the chastisements of Thy hand, become better prepared for that state to which we are all hastening. While we are continued in life, may we be preserved from all real evil; and may it be our sincere and earnest desire to work the work which Thou hast given us to do, so that when the night of death cometh, we may be prepared to die, and may be owned and approved by Thee when we stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Every blessing for time and for eternity I supplicate as his disciple, and ascribe unto Thee, his Father and our Father, his God and our God, never-ending praises. Amen.

## SATURDAY MORNING.

—o—

Psalm cxxxvii., 4.—How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

OW, indeed, should they do so—desolate, captive, weeping by the rivers of Babylon—in the midst of those who made a mock of God—their hearts torn with the remembrance of their own unfaithfulness? The songs of Zion told them of the pleasant times when they sat and sang them, every man under his own fig-tree, and related to their children the wonderful works of God; or when they were reëchoed from the rocks of Judea, and their melody softened by the streams of Jordan, hallowed by so many memories of the past; or when they went up, in goodly company, to the house of God, to sound His praises, in full chorus, through its gorgeous porticos. *Then* how every object around them helped to attune their souls to harmony with the holy psalms of their prophet king! *Now* how mournful the change! The Lord's songs were not meant for a strange land; discordant notes would spoil their sacred music, and the thoughts of the past would choke their utterance. Only the humble accents of a penitent and broken heart were meet for them. "Turn again our captivity, O Lord!"

Are the songs of Zion always sweet to *our* ears? Are

we always ready to sing praises to the Lord? Are we at all times glad when it is said unto us, "Let us go up to the house of our God?" If we feel that we cannot sing the Lord's song, it is because we are in a strange land, and have no longer the peace and freedom of the sons of God. There are jarring notes, if not without, within our souls, and we fear to mingle holy music with them. Those songs call back to us the innocent days of our childhood, when we first heard them, with mingled delight and awe, from our parents' lips; we remember that the water of life was then flowing in pure streams in our souls; it is now as a river in a strange land, and no longer reflects the glorious heavens of our Canaan. They remind us of all the holy aspirations, all the good resolutions they excited in our hearts when our *glad* voices united with those of our fellow worshippers to sing them in the house of our God; but how have these now been forgotten! The songs of Zion would bring us into the presence of our God; we fly from it because our hearts are not right with Him; our souls are in captivity; we are in a strange land.

The haughty conqueror who carried us there is Sin. Shall we stay under his bondage? Our own beloved Sovereign, the Lord whom we had forgotten, is awaiting our return to our own pleasant land. He listens to our morning and evening prayer with our faces directed towards Zion, "Turn again our captivity, O Lord!"

Shall we not hasten to return to Him? He will even come to meet us on the way; He will help us to rebuild our ruined temple; and then shall we be glad when they say unto us, "Let us go up to the house of the Lord." Then shall we sing His songs with rejoicing, and make melody with our hearts unto God.

MOURN not for those who slumber in the land  
Where rest their fathers; grieve not that the hand  
Of Him who led them on hath clos'd their days,  
While walking still in Zion's pleasant ways.

Bemoan not those, preëminently blest,  
Whose toils are ended, who have gain'd their rest;  
No haughty conqueror shall bid them roam,  
No foreign lord shall tear them from their home.

But weep for those whose hearts within them burn  
To see that land to which is no return;  
Who sigh in vain for Jordan's pleasant rills,  
Judea's fertile plains, or Salem's hills.

Shed bitter tears for them, for they are driv'n  
E'en from their trust in God, their hope in heav'n:  
Estrang'd in heart and clime, they dare not sing  
Th' enraptured praises of their prophet king.

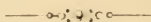
Yet, O ye guilty stock of Judah's race,  
Still will ye turn and seek your Father's face,  
Submissive 'neath the rod, still Zionward pray,  
Ye shall be heard, your sins be wash'd away.

And though your sun sink on a foreign strand,  
Still breathe your latest wishes towards the land  
Where, all their captive sighs and bondage o'er,  
Your sons shall serve their God, and stray no more.



## PRAYER.

WITH the return of the morning Thou, O! Father, renewest unto us Thy loving kindness. With the return of the morning it is our wisdom and duty to devote ourselves anew to Thee, and our happiness and privilege to repose our hope and trust in Thee. Various are the duties which lie before us; many are the snares which beset us; severe may be the trials to which we may be called. Our wisdom is but ignorance, our strength is but weakness. But unto Thee are known our dangers and difficulties; be Thou my present and daily help. May uprightness and integrity preserve me, and my worldly business be pursued under a sense of Thy authority and presence. In the most unbended moments may I never fall into sin and folly. May I always be able to maintain composure and seriousness of mind, and purity of heart. Endue me with fortitude to resist every temptation. Warm my breast, in the enjoyment of every blessing, with devout gratitude; and assist me to bear affliction with patience and submission. Suffer not my heart to indulge any sinful passion, or to entertain any evil thoughts. Help me to look forward to the end of life, and to prepare for it. Assist me to sow the seeds of divine knowledge, of religious wisdom, of increasing holiness, now; that, having sown to the spirit, of the spirit I may reap life everlasting: through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.



## SATURDAY EVENING.

—o—

Revelations xiv., 3.—And they sung as it were a new song before the throne.

OWERFUL emotions of joy seek for outward expression. This is one of the laws of our very nature. The expression will be suitable to the emotion. Grief pours forth its wailings; joy is heard in the modulations of verse and the sweet swells and cadences of music. One reason for this is, that thus our joy may be social. The shout of one warrior animates another. The song of one labourer cheers another, as well as himself, in their mutual toil. The song of victory in one part of the field stimulates the combatants where the battle is yet doubtful; and the common chorus heightens the common triumph. In heaven all is social, all is action and re-action. There is song in heaven because there is joy there; joy too strong to be confined to the heart. It must not only be felt, but sung; not only sung, but sung in united chorus, rising till the voice is "as the voice of many waters, as the voice of a great thunder."

They "sang a new song." Every deliverance experienced by the saints of God calls for a new song. How much more, therefore, this, the final deliverance from earth! Their salvation is completed, and they now sing, "To him that loved us, and hath washed us from our sins in his blood, and made us Kings and Priests unto God; to him be glory and dominion for ever." Their song is new, as demanded by new blessings. Nor shall the song be new as to individuals only, but as to the whole glorified church. The church, even upon earth, has ever sung the mercies and the judgments of God. At the passage of the Red Sea, the construction of the tabernacle, the opening of the temple, the people sang praises to God. As they went to their great festivals, they were found "coming to Zion with joy." So now. Every Sabbath hears the church singing her psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs. And all heaven shall sing when the millstone is cast into the waters, and antichrist is destroyed. And this song is new, because its great subject, Christ crucified, never waxes old. Even here "the people of God are satisfied with his goodness;" how much more when heavenly poetry modulates the verse, and heavenly voices attune the lay!

SING, Christian, sing! for you alone  
Possess the immortal power of song;  
The God who formed you for his own  
Inspires your heart, inspires your tongue:  
What though your pilgrim journey lies  
O'er desert mountains, rude and wild?  
The song of love which charms the skies,  
Has many a pilgrim's toil beguil'd.

Then, Christian, sing! for soon the shade,  
The dreary shade which wraps the dead,  
Shall on your bosom, lowly laid,  
Shall on your silent lips be spread:  
While pity moves the heaving breast,  
While yet the tender tear can flow,  
Oh! sing the love that offers rest  
To man, the child of guilt and woe.

Sing! for these humble strains must cease,  
Lost in unutterable bliss,  
When, freed from sorrow, face to face,  
You see the Saviour as he is:  
When life, immortal life is won,  
The song of hope no more can rise;  
She breathes her last, her sweetest tone,  
Before the dawn of paradise.

The voice of Faith and Hope must die;  
And not to mortal ears are given  
The lofty hymns of victory,  
Unknown but to the sons of heaven;  
Yet have our pilgrim-lays the theme  
Which crowns their song of joy above;  
In heaven and earth the Saviour's name  
Unites the eternal song of love.



## PRAYER.

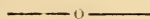
THOU, O! Father, rulest in heaven, and there we shall behold Thy glory. But here we are pilgrims; here we see through a glass, darkly; here we are too often in a land of captivity, where sin tyrannizes over us. And how shall we sing the songs of Zion in a strange country? Blessed be Thy name, that though thou peculiarly lovest those, Thy sons, who are ever with Thee, and surround the throne of Thy glory with a perpetual hymn of holiest adoration, Thou dost not overlook us, Thy servants, who are still struggling with the weaknesses and trials of mortality; who, while we long for holiness, are still enchained by the powers of evil passions and temporal desires; and who are often tempted to disbelieve Thy promises, from their very vastness and overwhelming love, though we pray and strive to follow him who is the great leader and finisher of faith. O! Father, visit me, even me, with Thy presence and Thy peace. Cast me not off for my misdeeds, nor reward me according to my great unworthiness. But look in pity upon my frailties; let Thine arm support me in my difficulties, and let Thy Holy Spirit guide me into all purity, and truth, and love, and peace, and trust, and joy, for ever. Hear me, I entreat Thee, for the sake of Thine own infinite mercy, which Thou hast revealed unto us through Thy Son Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.





## FOURTH WEEK.

### SUNDAY MORNING.



Ephesians ii., 10.—Fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.

**I**N how many tongues, by what various voices, with what measureless intensity of love, is the name of Christ breathed forth to-day! What cries of penitence, what accents of trust, what plaints of earnest desire, pass away to God! What an awful array of faces that gaze forth into immortality with various looks of terror or of love! The vows and prayers whose millions crowd the gates of mercy no recording angel could tell, but only the infinite memory of God. Of how glorious a church, then, are we members when we kneel within the house of God! In how solemn an act do we take our part! With how sublime a brotherhood do we own our fellowship!

But our worship together brings us into yet nobler connections. It unites us by a chain of closest sympathy with past generations. In our helps to faith and devotion

in that holy place, we avail ourselves of the thought and piety of many extinct ages. We reverently read those ancient Scriptures, which have gathered around them the trust, and procured the heart-felt repose, of so many tribes and periods since prophets and apostles first gave them forth. We sing the hymns which a goodly company of pious men have left as the record of their communion with Heaven. And it is impossible to look at the consecrated names of those "sweet singers" of Christendom without feeling ennobled by their communion, and even astonished at our sympathy with them. Do not we, the living, take up, in adoration and prayer, the thoughts of the dead, and feel them divinely true? Do they not come forth as if fresh coined from our own hearts? Indeed, could we ourselves so faithfully utter the consciousness of our inner being, or shape so interpreting a voice for our secret life? What an impressive testimony this to the sameness of our nature through every age, and the immortal perseverance of its holier affections! The language of *their* confessions, their struggles, their desires, speaks our own; the light that gladdened them shines now upon our hearts; and the mists they could not penetrate brood now upon our path. There is the choice minstrel of Israel, true alike to the spirit of mourning or of joy; there are the venerable fathers of the ancient church, whose vespers, chanted centuries ago, will suit this night as well; there is the adamant, yet genial, LUTHER, telling, with the severity of an eye witness, the awfulness of judgment; there is the noble MILTON, breathing his sweet and rugged music out of darkness; there is the afflicted COWPER, sending out the tenderest strains from his benighted spirit; with an attendant multitude of the faithful,—the confessor, the

exile, the missionary,—a chorus of sublime voices, with which it is a sacred privilege to be in harmony. And these are not merely the accents of the past, but the anthem of the sainted dead—the strains of immortals that look back upon their toils, and behold us singing their songs of sadness here, while they have already learned the melodies of everlasting joy. Blessed communion of earth with Heaven!—making us truly one family, below, above; and rendering us fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the very household of God!

And soon we, too, shall drop the note of earthly aspiration, and join that upper anthem of diviner love. The hour cometh when we shall cease the mournful cry with which earth must ever pray to Heaven, and grief ask pity to its tears, and the tempted call for help in the crisis of danger, and the labouring will implore a freshened strength. Exiles as yet from the spirit of unanxious joy, we catch but the echoes of that heavenly peace, and yield response but faint and low. Yet even now the free heart of the happy and triumphant shall be ours, in proportion as we are true to the condition of *faithful service*, which alone can make us one with them. The communion of saints brings to us their conflict first, their blessings afterwards; those who will not with much patience strive with the evil, can have no dear fellowship with the good; we must weep their tears, ere we can win their peace. This sorrowful condition once accepted, the sympathies of Heaven are not slow to rise within the soul; it is the tension of sacred toil, that on the touch of every breath of life brings music from the chords of love. And then the tone that *here* sinks in the silence of death, shall *there* swell into an immortal's fuller praise. We shall leave it to others to take up the



supplicating strain ; shall join the emancipated brotherhood of the departed ; and, in our turn, look down on the outstretched hands of our children, waiting our welcome and embrace. O ! may the Great Father, in his own fit time, unite in one the parted family of heaven and earth !

HALLELUJAH ! best and sweetest  
Of the hymns of praise above !  
Hallelujah ! thou repeatest,  
Angel-host, these notes of love :  
This ye utter,  
While your golden harps ye move.

Hallelujah ! church victorious  
Join the concert of the sky ;  
Hallelujah ! bright and glorious,  
Lift, ye saints, this strain on high !  
We, poor exiles,  
Join not yet your melody.

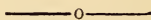
Hallelujah ! strains of gladness  
Comfort not the faint and worn :  
Hallelujah ! sounds of sadness  
Best become the heart forlorn :  
Our offences  
We with bitter tears must mourn.

But our earnest supplication,  
Holy God ! we raise to Thee ;  
Visit us with Thy salvation,  
Make us all Thy peace to see !  
Hallelujah !  
Ours at length this strain shall be.

## P R A Y E R.

FATHER of holiness and truth! Thou didst close our eyes on the toil and sorrow of the week past; Thou hast refreshed our bodies and our spirits with peaceful rest; and now Thou awakenest us to the day of earthly rest and heavenly toil, to the day of peace from worldly cares and of strife with our own hearts, to the day when Thou invitest us to listen to Thine own voice speaking solemnly in the gospel of Thy Son. Speak to my heart, O! Father, and to all, in the silent teachings of Thy Spirit; and rouse our souls to earnest purpose, and to contrite submission. Draw the veil of faith and hope over the glaring pressure of immediate interests; make us feel the realities of the heavenly state; and be filled with longing after the treasures at Thy right hand. Make us to accept willingly the strife of duty; and lowly to bend with humbled spirits before Thy fatherly corrections. Suffer us not to lose the warmth of our dear love to the departed; but may our longing for the blessed reunion quicken us in the times of fierce temptation, and in the dangerous periods of the soul's tired sleep. O! Father, help us in our watch, lest we carelessly sink into perdition. Let the words of Christ this day renew our life; and let the waters from the eternal fountain cheer our hearts. Now break to us the bread of heaven; and, in the strength thereof, let us endure the conflicts of the coming week. And when weeks and years are over, may we, and all our dearly beloved ones, be united in the eternal Sabbath of Thy love, through the Redeemer, Jesus. Amen. So be it, for Thine own Name's sake.

## SUNDAY EVENING.



John xii., 7.—Then said Jesus, "Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this."

O what an affecting incident does this allude, and what depths does it reveal of our Saviour's inmost soul!

Six days before that Passover when his soul was to be troubled even to death; when he knew that the city which he loved and would have saved, should turn against him, and that the end would be—his last conflict in and over death—Jesus retired, for a short space, to that peaceful village, beneath the hallowed mount, where those dwelt whom he *loved*. He was received at the house of Simon, the leper. We know nothing of him but this, that he was, doubtless, one who owed to Christ the power of enjoying the blessings of life. He testified his respect by preparing a supper for him, and by inviting to it one who was bound to his Master by the double tie of love and gratitude. "Lazarus was one that sat at table;" the usages of society did not permit the sisters also to be there; but Martha, unchecked even by the former gentle reproof of her Lord, obtained the privilege of serving him. The two first Evangelists do

not mention these touching circumstances ; but merely the fact, that Jesus was received at the house of Simon. John, who dwelt with affectionate interest on what most interested the personal feelings of his beloved Master, particularly says that Lazarus was there at table, " Who had been dead." The gentle-hearted shrinking Mary did not join her sister in her mark of respect, but prepared one characteristic of herself. She had, on a former occasion, sat at his feet and heard his words ; now, her heart overflowing with gratitude to him who had restored her brother to her, she brings a pure and very costly offering of balsam of spikenard to anoint them. Matthew and Mark only mention the general fact of a " woman " having done so ; and say, that she anointed his head, but add the striking circumstance of her breaking the alabaster box which contained the offering, doubtless that it might never be put to a less holy use. *John* knew that it was the grateful Mary ; and observed, that she did not pour the balsam only on his head ; but humbly " anointed his feet, wiping them with the hair of her head." Those around knew not the mind that was in her, and did not sympathize with her ; they even expressed displeasure against her. How must her heart have overflowed with emotion, when she heard the blessed words from her Lord, " She hath done a good deed for me, she hath done what she could ;" yet her joy must have been mingled with deep sorrow by the touching addition, " For the day of my burial hath she done this."

Thus ends the record of this beautiful incident, except



that the two first Evangelists add a prophetic remark of our Lord, which they have thus fulfilled, "Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, this also which she hath done, shall be spoken for a memorial of her."

To us, how much does this simple narrative reveal of our Saviour's thoughts and feelings and trials! He had come to Jerusalem to fulfil his mission by his death; his few last remaining days were spent in public, teaching in the Temple; but every evening found him at the beloved village of Bethany, which was now hallowed by having been the scene of the most remarkable display of that mighty power which had been given him by the Father. Here he was received by one who had probably owed to him all that could make life valuable: the friend whom he loved was here; and the two grateful sisters, each showing her affectionate respect in her own peculiar way. We can perceive that Jesus deeply felt the marks of friendship he received; for though he said but little, that little was full of tenderness. But nothing could banish from his mind his approaching trial. The thought of it did not shed a gloom around him; but all around mingled with it. "For the day of my burial hath she done this." He knew that it was near, but contemplated it with holy calmness; for to him the tomb was but the gate of Heaven. And his own approaching trials did not make him less than ever tenderly considerate of others. He knew that Mary's feelings would prompt her to pay him, even at the tomb, the last tribute of love; but that she might be

spared that agonizing duty by the reflection, that by abstaining from it she was fulfilling his wishes, he desired her to regard this as her final offering.

Truly did he "bear our sorrows;" truly did he bear them as the beloved Son of a Heavenly Father! How can we sufficiently love and reverence him, who, with trials and temptations like our own, but far greater than we are called upon to bear, was so pure and holy, so full of love and piety?

SEE the grateful sister bending  
O'er her much-loved Saviour's form;  
While her thanks to heaven ascending  
From her heart burst pure and warm.  
For his mercy, prompt to save,  
Doth she bless her heavenly Lord;  
For a brother from the grave,  
To the light of life restor'd.

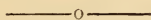
Who shall blame the kind oblation,  
Perfumes rich, profusely shed!  
No, through each remotest nation  
Shall her grateful fame be spread!  
Fair the diamond's star-like blaze,  
Through the dark mine richly strew'd;  
Fairer far the gentle rays  
Of the Christian's gratitude.

## PRAYER.

I PRAISE Thee, O! our God and Father, for the gospel of pardon and of peace, which Thou hast sent us through Thy Son. I thank Thee for that love which he manifested in submitting to death for us; for his holy precepts and example; and for the hope of eternal life to all who believe and obey him. O! that my soul may be sincerely humbled under a sense of my many transgressions and neglects of duty; under the recollection of resolutions unfulfilled, of warnings unheeded, of talents unimproved! I pray not only for mercy to pardon my sins, but for strength to enable me to subdue them, and for grace to help in the day of temptation. Sanctify my understanding, that I may rightly conceive Thy holy truths and fully apprehend them. Sanctify my will, that it may bend itself to Thy blessed will in all things. Sanctify my affections, that I may set my heart upon Thee, and desire nothing in comparison with Thee. Sanctify my passions, that they may be purified from all defilement of the flesh and of the spirit. Establish in me a holy disposition, that I may be kept in Thy favour and love by a persevering continuance in well doing. And may I, and all I love, so pass through things temporal, that finally we lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.



## MONDAY MORNING.



Psalm iv., 6.—Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us.



MY Father, how very glorious is the radiance which Thou sheddest on this beautiful world that Thou hast made! How fitly does *light*, Thy own brilliant creation, which Thy word diffused over the material world, typify that spiritual light in which Thou dwellest!

Before the sun has arisen, a dull indistinct mist involves all the fairest objects on the earth, and gloom hangs over the heavens. But when he rises, all nature rejoices, animate and inanimate; the fogs of earth soon disappear; what was dark now glows with inexpressible brightness, and glimpses of heaven seem opening to our dazzled sight. O! Sun of righteousness, so lift up upon us Thy light, that our mists may vanish, that the darkness of our minds may be illumined, that the glories of the invisible world may be revealed to the eye of faith.

The mid-day sun is often clouded over; we wander among the most beautiful works of God, yet they call from us but faint expressions of admiration; a charm has passed away from them; but the glorious orb again shines forth



with his full splendour, and what a change comes over all! How do our hearts leap within us, and our souls experience an indescribable gladness, as we see his light revealing to us beauties before unnoticed; as the dull monotonous grey changes into innumerable exquisitely harmonized colours; as light and shade vary the scene; and forms before unnoticed rise before us in all their fair proportions. Why do we deem the moral world a dreary waste? Why is this earth a wilderness? Why do our hearts sink within us, and our spirits long to flee away? The light of God's countenance is hidden from us, and we behold all things with the dullness of our own narrow vision. Let faith shed over all the brightness of the Eternal One, and let us view all things as illumined by infinite wisdom and love, what cause for admiration and gratitude shall we see all around us, and what a foretaste shall we have of the perfect beauty and joy, which will be diffused over the whole creation of God, when that which is perfect is come.

The sun of this lower world must set; his daily departure reminds us of the last, when time shall be no more. Yet how beautiful is his light ere it is withdrawn; how does all nature gladly, yet mournfully, receive his parting smile; how does he impart a softened warmth, a mellowed beauty, to all things earthly which are soon to be sunk in night, and shed his full glories on things heavenly, opening worlds of transcendent brightness to the enraptured eye. So dost Thou, Great Source of uncreated light, reveal Thy glories, which never set, to the departing spirit. So dost Thou soften to it the brightness of all earthly things, that it may fix its gaze on the splendours of the eternal world; the weak and sinking, on whom

Thou sheddest the light of Thy countenance, becomes strong in faith and hope, and is blessed, while still on earth, with a foretaste of heaven.

Irradiate my dark soul, O! my God, with the knowledge of Thy word, that I may do Thy will; shine with the light of Thy love upon the path of my pilgrimage; and finally receive me to Thy glory!

THE morning dawn'd, but no bright glorious sun  
Kindled my waking soul to hope and joy.  
Dark clouds obscur'd the pure ethereal vault,  
And deadening mist the earth. I sigh'd,  
The gloom sank on my soul. Again I look'd;  
A roseate hue touch'd the o'erhanging clouds,  
They glow'd with light approaching. Now behold,  
Midst floods of glory, still more glorious,  
The sun ariseth! The weak eye in vain  
Attempts to gaze, in awe and wonder lost;  
Yet on some isles, floating in radiance on,  
Outskirts of heaven, it turns its longing look,  
And thoughts unearthly fill the ravish'd soul.

My spirit! hast thou never faithless sigh'd,  
When clouds o'erhung thy morn? Has ne'er a doubt  
Darken'd thy faith? Behold, thy Father's love  
Shines brightly over all, illumines all  
With rays of faith and hope;—then in thy soul  
Receive its beams of light ineffable!

## PRAYER.

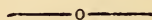
BOUNDLESS art Thou, O ! Thou whom no eye can see, and no tongue can name, boundless in power and glory ! All things are full of Thee. At Thy bidding the shades of night hasten away. And now that Thou hast again covered the earth with light as with a garment, and we rejoice in the splendours of morning, I would exalt my thoughts to the contemplation of Thy majesty and seek inspiration in Thy praise. Dispose my mind aright, and let Thy gracious spirit, like a ministering angel, descend and set in order my affections and build an altar in my bosom, and prepare an offering and kindle a sacrifice, so that my prayer may rise in memorial before Thee, and bring down new blessings, new and precious gifts, new strength for Thy blessed and everlasting service. Pour down Thy light into my inmost soul and fill it with Thy breath. Let no stubborn pride, no inordinate self-love, no besetting sin, have power to resist or obstruct the influence of Thy grace ; but do Thou enlighten my understanding, renew my heart, subdue my headstrong will, and may the whole of this day show that these few moments of devotion have been blest by Thee, that I have received the visit of Thy love, and strength from on high. O Father, may I not be of the number of those who draw nigh unto Thee with their lips, while their hearts are in captivity to their

own sinful devices. Having now sought Thy blessing, may I seek it without ceasing this day by every word and work; and when the sun again sinks into the west, may light and peace remain to rejoice my soul, and to prepare me for still richer blessings, for still greater progress, and a more entire consecration of my being to truth and to Thee. I confide in the unsearchable riches of Thy love, disclosed by all Thy works, but most gloriously of all by Thy Son Jesus Christ, for whom I bless Thee for ever and ever. Amen.





## MONDAY EVENING.



Mark xi., 11.—And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.



WHAT a moment was that, full of thoughts too great for utterance! What a glance did Jesus give on the scene of his future sufferings!

The *morning* had seen him *apparently* in all the exultation of approaching triumph; the lowly Jesus, the carpenter's son, had entered the proud capital of his nation as a conqueror; he had, indeed, conquered all hearts which were not already enchained by sin and prejudice. The disciples began to praise God with a loud voice; they that went before, and they that followed, cried, "Hosanna!" and all the city of Jerusalem was moved when the multitude exclaimed, "This is Jesus, the prophet of Galilee!" The Temple, too, was the scene of similar joy and excitement, though the Chief Priests and Scribes vainly attempted to check it. The blind and lame were brought to him in the holy place to be healed, and the glad voices of the children resounded through its magnificent porticos, "Hosanna to the Son of David!"

Yet Jesus had heard in this general rejoicing only the sad echoes of approaching lamentation. When he drew nigh to the city, now glorious and beautiful on its hills, with the Temple shining gorgeously before him, and its people preparing for their solemn festivity, he knew that ere long all would be levelled with the ground, and he wept over it.

But now *evening* was come; the hour of prayer had given a holy stillness to the scene, and from the Temple he looked round about upon all things. Within a few short days all would be changed. The voices of those that loved him would be silent; only the cries of, "Away with him," would be heard; and into this very Temple would he be led in mock solemnity before the council of his enemies. Then the dark, dreadful scenes which would succeed must have risen up before him, perhaps for a time obscuring the glory that would follow.—But it is almost presumptuous even to attempt to realize what were then the Saviour's emotions.

When he had seen all, the eventide being now come, he withdrew with the twelve to his peaceful home at Bethany, where were those who loved him, and whom he loved. There we may follow him in the sacred recesses of our hearts; but what words could, without the aid of inspiration, venture to express what were the holy meditations of the Son of God?

Go to dark Gethsemane,  
Ye that feel the tempter's pow'r:  
Your Redeemer's conflict see;  
Watch with him one bitter hour:  
Turn not from his griefs away;  
Learn of Jesus Christ to pray.

Follow to the Judgment Hall;  
View the Lord of life arraign'd;  
O the wormwood and the gall!  
O the pangs his soul sustain'd!  
Shun not suffering, shame, or loss;  
Learn of him to bear the cross.

Calvary's mournful mountain climb;  
There, submissive at his feet,  
Mark that miracle of time,  
Love's own sacrifice complete:  
"It is finish'd," hear him cry;  
Learn of Jesus Christ to die.

Early hasten to the tomb,  
Where they laid his breathless clay!  
All is solitude and gloom;  
Who hath taken him away?  
Christ is ris'n; he seeks the skies;  
Thither learn of him to rise.

## P R A Y E R .

THOU, O! Father, drawest yet more nigh unto us, when we feel the emptiness of this world. In the time when all things go smoothly with us, and our occupations flow in the accustomed channel, then we are too apt to forget Thee, who art the Author of our peace. But in the time of fierce conflict and of difficulty, then our weakness and our ignorance drive us unto Thee; and Thou, most compassionate One, dost not upbraid us for our unconcern, but givest us the direction which we need. Now, Father, I would look round upon all the events of the day past. Wherein I have sinned, I crave Thy pardon. Wherein unknowingly I have fallen, guide and sustain me. Wherein my heart has quailed in fear, now may I take calm confidence. Wherein I have rejoiced at appearances, may I rejoice with trembling, since I know not what these things mean. And the cares, and the sorrows, and the toils, and the evils of the day are past; and Thou hast gathered us, Thy children, together from our work places in Thy vineyard, and given us the sweets of family affection, and united us unto our dearest ones. Father! with humble hope may we look forward to that best of gatherings hereafter. There are many places here that are desolate; but there, no parting comes. Now we have parted from one another, and we go to rest. Be with us, Father; and, whether on earth or in heaven, may we wake to do Thy will, even as the Saviour did. Amen.



## TUESDAY MORNING.

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Zechariah vi., 12.—Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The Branch, and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord.

HE Messiah was to be the great temple-builder, and to erect that glorious and spiritual house, of which both the old and the new temple were the expressive types.

Christ, the Branch, forms the inward temple in our hearts, like the temple of old, according to the pattern in his own mind. He lays its foundations and builds its walls strong in righteousness. He brings in the ornaments of every lovely grace and harmonizing affection. He lights in it the lamps of heavenly wisdom ; he kindles upon its altar the everlasting fire ; and inflames there those grateful clouds of its incense.

A temple of God implies the residence of God with man ; and the great object of Messiah's manifestation was to bring back God to the soul of man, that thus every man might become God's temple. Thus is he called "Emanuel, God with us." Thus did he ascend on high, and receive gifts for men, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

So the Apostle prays, as for every believer, "that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith."

He, the man whose name is the Branch, even he shall build the temple of the Lord; he shall bring God to man, and fix his residence in the human spirit. He does this by making us sensible of the loss of God, and by fixing in us the fear of everlasting separation; by exposing the vanity that surrounds us, the dark plunge into ruin before us; by exciting the desire after God, the effect of newly returning life;—the language of the soul now is, "I go mourning after Thee; I thirst after Thee in a dry and barren land where no water is;"—by giving that seeking spirit which can rest in nothing but its proper object, God; God in Christ; God lifting up the light of his countenance; by showing us the only way to the Father;—he does this by inspiring faith. And thus the work is done; the veil is removed, God shines forth, the temple is purged by the sprinkled blood, and filled by the hallowing Spirit. Now man walks with God, calls Him Father, turns to seek Him in the soul, and finds Him there. Now he delights in God; he finds how free is prayer, and how accepted is praise. What hasting to Him for shelter! What a sacred fear of offending Him! Man is now strong in Omnipotence, light in Light, love in Love, pure in Purity, and satisfied in infinite fulness. "Return to thy rest, O! my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? There is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee." Thus it is that God returns to man; thus that the man whose name is the Branch builds the temple of God.

"DESCEND to thy Jerusalem, O Lord!"  
Her faithful children cry with one accord;  
Come, ride in triumph on! behold we lay  
Our guilty lusts and proud wills in thy way!

Thy road is ready, Lord!—Thy paths, made straight,  
In longing expectation seem to wait  
The consecration of thy beauteous feet;  
And hark! Hosannas loud thy footsteps greet!

Welcome, O welcome to our hearts, Lord! here  
Thou hast a temple too, and full as dear  
As that in Sion, and as full of sin;  
How long shall thieves and robbers dwell therein?

Enter and chase them forth, and cleanse the floor!  
Destroy their strength, that they may never more  
Profane with traffic vile that holy place  
Which thou hast chosen, there to set thy face.

And then, if our stiff tongues shall silent be  
In praises of thy finish'd victory,  
The temple stones shall cry, and loud repeat  
Hosanna! and thy glorious footsteps greet.

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### PRAYER.

For ever blessed be Thy name, O! Father, for Thy  
unexampled love in sending forth Thy beloved Son into  
the world, that we might be formed to a life of holiness by  
the influence of his word and spirit. Suffer me not to  
neglect this great salvation; but, through a lively faith,  
may I effectually devote myself to him in all the ways of

holy obedience. May I learn of him to guard against the temptations which would divert me from a holy, benevolent and upright course ; or which would obstruct my progress in it. Unknown and untried are many of the trials to which we are daily exposed ; may I enter on this and on every day with pious fear. May no irregular working of my own thoughts, or the violence of appetite, disturb the peace, or defile the purity of my heart. Let no secrecy betray me into any sin for which my own reflections would reproach me ; and which Thou, who seest in secret, wilt condemn. May I ever act under a sense of Thy presence, and be governed by an ardent desire of Thine approbation. May I cast all my cares upon Thee, in a joyful persuasion that Thou, my Heavenly Father, carest for me ; and may that peace of Thine, which passeth all understanding, fill my heart and mind in Christ Jesus. Thus may I pass through the ensaring scenes of this world without being ensnared by them ; and meet the trying events of life without making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience. Thus may I finish my course with joy, and lay hold of that crown of righteousness which the Saviour will give to all them that love his appearance. Amen.





## TUESDAY EVENING.

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Psalm civ., 24.—O Lord, how manifold are Thy works!  
in wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is  
full of Thy riches.

LL things depend on God alone. The forming hand of the great Creator first gave existence to all. The works of nature, great and extended, rose into order and beauty at His command. He spake and it was done. The unbounded universe, world beyond world, and system beyond system, at His word sprang into being. Where the mind, in its most daring flights, cannot reach, there has His power been exerted,—nowhere are his footsteps unknown. We feel lost in the immensity of His works. As the powers of our minds are enlarged, the more do we perceive that we are unable to discern limits to His creating energy. Yet in all are we able to discover the proofs of His great and glorious attributes. All that we see is regulated by law bespeaking power and wisdom and goodness. His power created, His power sustains in existence. His wisdom arranged, and His wisdom preserves in order and in beauty. His goodness has diffused happiness, and His wisdom and power combine with His unbounded goodness to produce the greatest sum of happiness. This

beautiful and well-ordered fabric, in all its minute, and in all its grand displays of benevolent design, loudly proclaims to its rational inhabitants that there is a God, that He is good, and that His tender mercies are over all His works. The varied systems, in their several turns, point us to Him, who causeth their variety. When the return of spring clothes the fields with verdure, and fills the earth and air with animation;—when all the various tribes of living beings seem anew to live and to enjoy their life;—while rich provision is everywhere making for the supply of their several necessities;—the bounties of His providence remind us of their source, and call upon us, in language to which ingratitude only can be deaf, to raise our praises to the great Author of good. When the labour of the husbandman comes to maturity;—when the fruits of the earth are to be gathered in for the supply of man;—strongly do we feel our dependence upon Him; and man, who too often forgets his Maker in the abundance of His works, is forced to acknowledge that there is a hidden cause beyond them. Whether His storms lay waste the fields, or His sunshine enables the husbandman to rejoice, we feel that upon His will, and His alone, our very existence depends. And when the hoar frost is scattered upon the earth;—when life, in its varied forms, is often suspended, and the face of nature almost appears a cheerless blank;—then do we recognise His hand;—then do we perceive that no human power could stay, for a moment, the days of light and life; and that, were not His preserving power continually exercised, all that seems would be; the blank which seems in the world would continue; the face of nature would not again be renewed; and man would be left to perish amidst the

wrecks of the creation around him. But while sensible that the works of nature are His works, and that He upholds all, the barren desert and the gloomy tempest change their features; the face of nature smiles; and when we connect Him with His operations, and observe that all proceeds as He will, and that His will is good,—the heart is lightened from its gloom, and in all can trace the wonders of His providence. And in the various changes of human life, and our own life, the same unceasing guardianship is displayed. Our lives are in His hands, and all the events of those lives furnish us with matter for grateful reflection. In the helpless period of infancy, while the opening bud of life was, in a thousand other instances, cut off by His command, the blight of death came not upon us, or was removed before its fatal influence was experienced. Who then warded from us the approach of death, when human skill and human affection were unavailing? God, who gave, continued that being. And when our moral life began, and those habits and impressions were to be formed upon which our virtue and holiness depend, the advantages we enjoyed in imbibing, from the lips of goodness and from the pages of eternal truth, the dictates of duty, all, through the medium of valuable relatives and friends, were derived from Him. If our feet were early taught to move in the steps of His commandments, if the path which leads to eternal life was thus rendered familiar to us, and its difficulties lessened, for this inestimable mercy we are indebted to Him, and gratefully bless His holy name. While the powers of our body and of our minds were acquiring their due vigour, the increase and preservation of these powers were owing to Him—to His wise laws, to His constant

superintendence. To various stages of existence He conducted us, and conducted us safely; and we are sensible that but for His protecting energy we should, long ere this, have ceased to be. We look, with wonder, on our frame; and view, with astonishment, the various provisions He has made for its support and well-being. We live from one moment to another only as He continues the means of life. When He takes away our breath, we die and return to the dust. Every personal, every relative, every social spring of good; the blessings of life, the blessings which respect eternity, all proceed from Him, and unto Him be all the praise.

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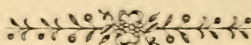
THE mighty God who rolls the spheres,
And storms and fire and hail prepares,
And guides this vast machine,—
His powerful hand our life sustains,
And scatters all those joys and pains
Which fill this chequered scene.

His piercing eye at once surveys
Where thousand suns and systems blaze,
And where the sparrow falls;
While seraphs tune their harps on high,
His ear attends the softest cry,
When human misery calls.

Eternal God! who shall not fear,
And trust, and love, with soul sincere,
Thine awful glorious name!
While man, Thy creature, swift decays,
Time has no measure for Thy days,—
Thou ever art the same.

P R A Y E R.

OF Thy gift it cometh, O! Father, that I am here this evening in peace. Thou hast watched over me, and Thy love hath kept me from harm. I look back on the struggles of the past, and none seem to have been worth the labour, save such as were conflicts with evil. I look back upon its sorrows, and wonder that they distressed me so, while I grieved but little for the plague of my own heart. Now, O! Father, may I lay myself to rest in Thee. Calm the turbulence of passion; quiet the throbbings of hope; repress the waywardness of the will; direct the motions of affection; sanctify my lot; and point my faith and trust steadily to the attainment of Thy enduring favour. Be Thou all in all to me, and all I love; and may all things earthly, while we bend them to our growth in grace and to the work of blessing, dwell lightly in our hearts, so that we may readily and even joyfully give up whatever Thou dost ask for. May we seek first Thy kingdom and righteousness, resting assured that then all things needful shall be added unto us. Father, pardon my past ingratitude and disobedience, and purify me, whether by Thy gentle or Thy sterner dealings, till I have done Thy will on earth, and Thou removest me to Thine own presence with the redeemed in heaven. Hear me and accept me through Thy Son, once the man of sorrows, now our glorified Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Amen.



WEDNESDAY MORNING.

Psalm cxxxi., 2.—Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother; my soul is even as a weaned child.

IN weanedness of soul there is presupposed a power in it of still loving and desiring. It is not the destruction of its appetite, but the controlling and changing of it. "A weaned child" still hungers, but it hungers no more after the food that once delighted it; it is quiet without it; it can feed on other things. And so with a soul that is weaned from the world; it still pants as much as ever for food and happiness, but it no longer seeks them alone in earthly objects. It has other resources. There is nothing in the world that it feels *necessary* for its happiness. This thing it loves, and that thing it values; but it knows it can do without them; and it is ready to do without them just *whenever God pleases*. Nor let it be supposed we speak of things *evil* in their nature only, or of certain questionable pleasures and indulgences. Far from this; we speak of all things worldly, be they good or be they bad. Money, business, honour, pleasure, affection, friends, relations, children—*everything* of earthly kind that the hungry heart of man ever fed on—this weanedness of soul can say of

them all, "If need be, *let them go.*" It checks the mind in the pursuit of them; it sobers the mind in the enjoyment of them; it prepares the mind to part with them; it quiets the mind when they *are gone.* It enables a man to rejoice in them while he has them, as though he rejoiced not; and to weep for them when he loses them, as though he wept not; and, dying daily to the world, to exchange, with comparative serenity, the semblance and the shadow for the substance and reality of things "hoped for." This is the happiness, and this the peace of saints.

Is there, then, any one thing that you feel you could not *bear* to part with? Or is there any one earthly thing that you feel you *must* obtain? then you do not possess a weaned soul. Could you give up all you have at God's call; and, having done so, instead of saying, "There goes all my happiness," could rather say, though yet with bleeding heart, "I can be *happy still*, my best treasure is yet left!" O! then yours is a weaned heart; and, with David, you may say, "I am even as a weaned child."

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QUIET, Lord, my froward heart,  
Make me teachable and mild;  
Upright, simple, free from art,  
Make me as a weaned child;  
From distrust and envy free,  
Pleased with all that pleaseth Thee.

What Thou shalt to-day provide,  
Let me as a child receive;  
What to-morrow may betide  
Calmly to Thy wisdom leave;  
'Tis enough that Thou wilt hear;  
Why should I the burden bear?

As a little child relies  
On a care beyond its own ;  
Knows he's neither strong nor wise ;  
Fears to stir a step alone ;  
Let me thus with Thee abide,  
As my Father, Guard, and Guide.

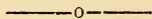
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### PRAYER.

O ! THOU Father and Friend of Thy creatures. With filial love and with filial reverence would I offer unto Thee my grateful praise for the goodness which has everywhere attended me ; deploring that I have been too unmindful of the hand which has been constantly stretched out to protect me ; presenting before Thy Throne of Grace my humble supplication, that the sense of dependence upon Thee, for all I have in possession or in hope, may lead me more and more steadily to devote myself to Thee. I present unto Thee, the Giver of every good and perfect gift, this my humble tribute of adoration and praise, earnestly praying that the gratitude which I would now cultivate in my soul may manifest itself in exciting me to do in all Things as Thou hast commanded. I supplicate this best of blessings, gracious Father, as the disciple of Jesus Christ ; ascribing unto Thee, the God and Father of all, never ending praises. Amen.



## WEDNESDAY EVENING.



John xiii., 31.—Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him."



THE great struggle was over! The Son of Man *had* shown forth his Heavenly Father's glory by his whole life; he who had been called, by a voice from heaven, the beloved Son of God, had not been called so in vain, for by him the spirit of God had been manifested in the flesh. Long had he been contemplating the final trial of his filial obedience, and he had, as the time approached, steadfastly set his face to go up to Jerusalem;—the death which he must accomplish at that city had been before him on the Holy Mount, when he had a slight foretaste of his future glory to support and encourage him;—the thought of his burial was awakened by the offering of devoted and respectful love;—and now, before the final consummation of his labours and sufferings, he was sharing, for the last time on earth, the holy paschal supper, with those who had been the chosen companions of his labours. They did not comprehend the thoughts and emotions which then filled his soul, yet they were *faithful*

followers; they were willing, though the flesh was often very weak,—all but one! That one, less than any of the others, knew the mind that was in his Master; yet on this occasion there was an awful intelligence between them. Judas was conscious that he was about to deliver up his Lord, and he perceived that his Lord knew it. “Having received the sop, he straightway went out.”

Now our Saviour appears relieved of a heavy load,—the presence of a traitor;—now the dreadful step was taken; for Judas had gone forth to do his work, and *he* had desired him to do it quickly;—now *he* had been glorified by his willing obedience, and God had been glorified by the devoted submission of him whom He had chosen to be the Saviour of men; and Jesus felt a firm confidence that since God was glorified by him, his seeming humiliation would be short, and that God would straightway glorify him. After this critical moment how freely did he pour forth his thoughts, and hopes, and consolations, to his disciples; how unrestrainedly did he pray in their presence to his Heavenly Father!

Can we read such passages as these, and not rejoice that he who was to be our Exemplar was a man of sorrows and of like passions with us, yet without sin? Can we withhold from him our deep and tender sympathy, under trials which no one of us can be called on to bear in equal intensity? Can we do otherwise than love him, who thus gave himself for us that we may be cleansed from all iniquity, and strive to show our love as he directed, by keeping his commandments?

If love, the noblest, purest, best,—  
If truth, all other truths above,  
Will claim return from every breast,  
Oh! surely Jesus claims our love.

There's not a hope with comfort fraught,  
Triumphant over death and time,  
But Jesus mingles in that thought,  
Forerunner of our course sublime!

We see him in the daily round  
Of social duty, mild and meek;  
With him we tread the hallow'd ground,  
Communion with our God to seek.

We see his gentle, pitying eye,  
When lowly want appeals for aid;  
We hear him in the frequent sigh,  
That mourns the waste which sin has made.

We meet him at the lonely tomb;  
We weep where Jesus wept before;  
And there, above the grave's dark gloom,  
We see him rise, and weep no more.

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## PRAYER.

LORD, how greatly Thou hast glorified us, by making us disciples of Thy Son! What high honour Thou hast bestowed on us, that Thou hast called us to love and follow Christ! We take account of all the happiness and the greatness and the pomps of this life; and we find that they are as chaff which the wind driveth away. We consider the sufferings of this present time, and we find that

they are not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall follow. We enter the narrow portal, and we see the cross and the thorny crown; but Thou hast shed over them a heavenly radiance, and we rejoice if we are counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ's sake. Father! sanctify unto me my best thoughts, that they may become, not an unwonted feast, but even as my daily bread. May I count it all joy, when I fall into divers trials; and may they work in me patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope,—a hope that maketh not ashamed; because Thy love, O! Father, is shed abroad in my heart, through the Holy Spirit which Thou hast given to me. And may I be worthy of Thy Holy Spirit of discipline and sorrow. May I, in the days of peace and prosperity, live closely with Thee, and act as responsible for Thy talents; in order that when the night of sadness comes, I may be prepared to submit myself to the lessons of Thy love. Father! I leave my lot with Thee, but oh! may I be purified from sin. Leave me not unto myself, I pray Thee; suffer me not to depart from the chamber of holy thought; but in spirit may the Saviour be ever with me, and may his love warm my heart into devout obedience. Thine may I be in life; Thine in death; Thine at the last great day, and for ever; Thine through the door of faith, which the good Shepherd hath opened to us in Thy name. Amen.





## THURSDAY MORNING.

—o—

Hebrews xi., 34.—Out of weakness were made strong.



HENCE is our strength? From God alone. How can we obtain strength? Solely by coming to Him. If our Saviour said, "I can of mine own self do nothing," how much more ought this to be the language of *our* lips, and the silent homage of *our* hearts?

Yet, though so weak children of the dust, we often fancy that we are strong. Our intellectual energy is great; we have a consciousness of power to penetrate the worlds of matter and the realms of thought, and there to make vast conquests. We imagine that we have moral strength; all the commandments have we kept from our youth, and we hold a just and holy sway over the minds of men. Yet we are not strong, for this very seeming strength separates us from Him without whom nothing is strong, and makes us worship self instead of the Creator.

Then he that is strong with his own strength falls before temptation; he is humbled in the dust; he has no refuge on earth; he flies to his Maker; he confesses his weakness; he implores strength from above; and out of weakness he is made strong.

Blessed are the sorrows which lead us to God ; blessed the trials which show us our weakness. He who cast down surely will raise up ; He who deadens the flame which burnt with an impure light, will rekindle it with His own brightness ; He who denies the strength we ask for in ignorance, will make His grace sufficient for us,—will make us strong out of weakness.

O ! my Father, may I seek no help but of Thee ! May I cast all my care upon Thee, and seek strength in Thee alone !

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O ! LORD, Thy heavenly grace impart,
And fix my frail, inconstant heart ;
Henceforth my chief desire shall be,
To dedicate myself to Thee,
To Thee, my God ! to Thee.

Whate'er pursuits my time employ,
One thought shall fill my soul with joy ;
That silent, secret thought shall be,
That all my hopes are fixed on Thee,
On Thee, my God ! on Thee.

Thy glorious eye pervadeth space ;
Thy presence, Lord ! fills every place ;
And wheresoe'er my lot may be,
Still shall my spirit cleave to Thee,
To Thee, my God ! to Thee.

Renouncing every worldly thing,
Safe 'neath the covert of Thy wing,
My sweetest thought henceforth shall be,
That all I want I find in Thee,
In Thee, my God ! in Thee.

P R A Y E R.

LORD and Giver of life! Father of our Spirits! I would this morning, with all seriousness and solemnity, renew the dedication of myself to Thee. Take, I beseech Thee, the full possession of my heart, which Thou hast formed for Thyself; and help me to make an unfeigned surrender of all that I have to Thee, the great Lord of all. With pure fervour would I cleave unto Thee; oh! preserve me to Thyself, and let nothing be able to separate me from Thy love. Help me to chase away all worldly affections from my heart, and to raise my thoughts to spiritual and heavenly things. May the great work of religion be considered by me as the most important and delightful employment in which I can be engaged; and in this let me never be slothful or negligent, but always prepared to serve Thee with cheerfulness and holy zeal. Form my soul to a likeness of Thyself; and, through the influence of Thy good Spirit, may I be led into the same mind that was in Christ. Let Thy blessing be upon my actions, and Thy grace direct my intentions, that the whole course of my life, and the principal designs and wishes of my heart, may always tend to the advancement of Thy glory, the good of others, and the eternal salvation of my own soul. Father! command what Thou pleasest, and give me grace to perform diligently what Thou commandest. Permit what seemeth good to Thee, and give me grace to suffer patiently what Thou permittest. Let Thy blessing descend upon me, and all mine, and dwell in our hearts for ever. I humbly supplicate this, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

THURSDAY EVENING.

—o—

Luke xxii., 42.—Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done.



OUR Saviour thus permits us, by his example, to pray that the bitter cup may pass from us;—*he* did so in deep anguish of soul, for he was enduring such intense suffering as, perhaps, no other human being has gone through; and, being in an agony, he prayed yet *more earnestly*; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground. Yet, while supplicating that the trial might be removed, he failed not to add, “Nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done.”

In that moment of deep gloom, our Saviour saw before him his own acute sufferings and death,—the desertion of his chosen friends and their subsequent darkness of soul; yet could he have *fully* discerned beyond the cloud the glory that should follow;—could he have had present to his mind the myriads that, through his sufferings, would be made partakers of that glory;—can we imagine that he would have offered the petition, “If Thou be willing, remove this cup from me?” But, though the veil of

nature's weakness dimmed all but his approaching trials, nothing could separate him from his love of his Father, and perfect confidence that His will is best;—his strength was made perfect through weakness.

The sons of men are often, like him who hath passed into the heavens before them, led through a gloomy valley to their eternal home. They groan, being heavily burdened with the weight of the flesh; they weep at the tombs of their best-beloved friends; they lament the misery and wickedness of their fellow-creatures; they are sunk down in the dust by the abasing conviction of their own unworthiness. Yet, if their wills are entirely swallowed up in the will of Him whose will alone is guided by infinite love and wisdom, can they feel more than the momentary gloom which was hallowed by him who was made perfect through suffering? The flesh is very weak,—it clogs our flight heavenward; yet it is a tabernacle built by Him who is a Spirit,—a shrine in which he has placed a portion of His own divinity; and if the spirit is willing, and strives to unite itself to Him, it will find that even this clay, which seems to impede its flight, may help it heavenward; and it will at last discern that all is very good. We weep, and our Saviour wept, when those whom we most love depart; but they are tears of bliss when we unite our wills with God's will, for we know that His good time is best for us and for them; and we thank Him for that love which is manifested as much when he takes as when he gives. We grieve when we confine our view to the narrow span of time and space around us, and to our own imperfect notions of what is right and good; for we see around, evil which we cannot control, misery which we cannot soothe; but we rejoice when we "take our stand in the divine nature,"

and see that all is infinite wisdom and mercy. And when we feel that we are utterly unworthy of the love of all, and a dark cloud hangs over our souls, let us acquiesce, with thankfulness, in a sorrow which our Father sees needful to subdue the pride of our hearts, and still say, "O! Father, not my will, but Thine, be done."

O! glorious hour, when our wills shall be entirely swallowed up in Thine, O! Father. When faith shall have had its perfect work! When we shall be one in Thee!

My God, my Father, while I stray
Far from my home, in life's rough way,
O! teach me from my heart to say,
Thy will be done.

Though dark my path and sad my lot,
May I be still and murmur not,
But breathe the prayer, divinely taught,
Thy will be done.

What though in lonely grief I sigh
For friends once loved no longer nigh,
Submissive still I would reply,
Thy will be done.

If Thou shouldst call me to resign
What most I prize, it ne'er was mine,
I only yield Thee what was Thine,
Thy will be done.

Control my will from day to day;
Blend it with Thine; and take away
All that now makes it hard to say
Thy will be done.

And when on earth I breathe no more
The prayer, oft mixed with tears before,
I'll sing upon a happier shore
Thy will be done.

PRAYER.

FATHER! I am very weak indeed, and in Thy will alone is strength. I am often lost in the mazes of ignorance and folly, and in Thy will alone is wisdom. I am overwhelmed with the sinfulness of my heart, and the disobedience of my life; and Thy law is holy, Thy will is truth and purity itself. O! when shall I be conformed unto the image of Thy Son? Shall I ever be delivered from the body of this death, which separates me from Thy holy love and presence? Lord, Thou knowest. Open to my view the hidden recesses of my soul, that I may see what it is that is rebellious against Thy will. Shew unto me the plague of my own heart. May I crucify every unholy desire, and every vain love; may I cast out my bosom sins, whatever they may be; may I mortify my members which are of the earth, and bring my body under subjection to Thy law; may I pull down every stronghold of pride, and lead my every thought into the

obedience of Christ. Father! I do not desire that my own will may be done. I know that it should not be. And if in my weakness and ignorance I ask for it, withhold from me my entreaties. May Thy will alone be done, by me and by all men, in earth as in heaven; now, as in the future days of Thy felt presence. May it be done cheerfully and lovingly; thoughtfully and earnestly: calmly, and with settled purpose; in joy, in sorrow; in health, in sickness; in the usual concerns of life, and in the unwonted claims of duty; in life, and in the near prospect of eternity; even as our Saviour said, "Not my will, but Thine, be done!" "Father! into Thy hands I commend my spirit." Amen.



FRIDAY MORNING.

Matthew xxvii., 51.—And behold! the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

IT was now the third hour since the supernatural darkness which had commenced at noon-day had shrouded the whole land of Judea. The evening sacrifice was offered in the presence of the assembled multitudes, whose terror-stricken prayers ascended with the smoke of the daily victim; and one of the priests had entered alone into the Holy Place, to burn incense on the golden altar. But a greater sacrifice was at the same time offered without the gate: Jesus dies, that all may have redemption, and may come to the knowledge of the saving truth which he brought from God. And the sacrifice is accepted by his Father; the Father who never loved him more than at that very moment, when thus suffering. As a testimony to His approbation, the darkness is removed! once more the glowing light of the declining sun sheds its cheerful radiance upon the towers of Zion; and the solitary priest in the Holy Place would rejoice to see the returning beams gild the clouds of smoke that ascended from the altar. But the dreadful omen had passed, only to give place to others yet more dreadful. What must have been his terror, when the

foundations of the temple shook under him, and the veil was torn asunder in the midst; when his wild gaze fell upon the simple walls and empty recesses of that sanctuary, with which he had associated all that was sublime and terrible in his religion? Must he not have been one among the "great company of the Priests" who afterwards became "obedient unto the faith?"

The veil of rites and ceremonies, which had hidden the glory of God, and obscured His mercy seat, was now for ever removed. Jesus had died; the law of Moses was at an end; the time was come when neither at the holy mount in Samaria, nor yet at Jerusalem alone, should men worship the Father. That generation did not pass until the awful voice had been heard in the Temple, "Let us depart hence:" the city of David was left desolate, and her children within her. They had imprecated on themselves the blood of the holy one and the just; the favour of God had departed from them; their covenant was broken; the middle wall of partition was thrown down; and the new covenant of universal brotherhood was established on its ruins. Jesus had nailed to his cross the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us.

Yet another veil was drawn aside at the death of Jesus. It was the veil which shrouded the mercy of the Father; which prevented the sinner from discerning the hopes of pardon; which left the desponding heart in doubt for the favour of its God. Jesus removed this veil, and displayed to us all the glories of the most holy place; he revealed to us the secret counsels of the Almighty; pointed us to the effulgent cloud of the divine presence which rested on the ark of the New Covenant; exhibited the two tables of the law, of love to God and man; and disclosed to us the ever-

lasting mercy-seat. This divine mercy-seat was sprinkled, not with the blood of bulls and goats, but with the precious blood of the Lamb, shed to ratify this gracious covenant of pardon. And thus not a yearly, but a perpetual atonement was offered for the sins of all who comply with the requirements of the blessed gospel, repentance and faithful obedience. To the death of Jesus we owe the possession of all the blessings of his religion; through it we now have access, by a new and living way, unto the throne of Him who commended His love to us by sparing not His own Son, but freely giving him up for us all.

And there is another veil, the darkness of which our Saviour hath removed; it is the veil of death, which aforetime hid the glories of immortality. Jesus, the great High Priest, passed through this gloomy curtain on the great day of expiation, in order that he might draw aside its terrors from us, and rise again from the dead, the first to an immortal life. Thus he has disclosed to us the Holy of Holies, where the glory of the Father peculiarly dwelleth. "That country is heaven;" it is the home of the Christian; and there every one that loveth the Saviour on earth shall see him as he is.

Christ, our Passover, hath been slain for us; let us, therefore, purge out the old leaven of wickedness and live in sincerity and truth. Let us crucify the flesh, with its affections and lusts, and walk in love, as Christ also loved us. Let us offer ourselves unto God a living sacrifice; and then every veil of sin and error, of weakness and doubt, of sorrow and bereavement, will be drawn away. Christ will dwell in our hearts by faith; and, hereafter, the life which is now hid with him in God will be revealed to us in the perfection of love and joy.

In the Cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time,
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.

When the woes of life o'ertake me,
Hopes deceive and fears annoy,
Never shall the Cross forsake me;
Lo! it glows with peace and joy.

When the sun of bliss is beaming
Light and love upon my way,
From the Cross the radiance streaming
Adds more lustre to the day.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,
By the Cross are sanctified;
Peace is there that knows no measure,
Joys that through all time abide.

In the Cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time,
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.

PRAYER.

SENSIBLE of my own weakness, I look up unto Thee, our Father, for Thine assistance and blessing. Surrounded as I am by numerous and powerful temptations, which tend to draw off my attention and to weaken my affections to Thee and duty, I earnestly implore all those aids which, in the gracious methods of Thy providence, Thou

bestowest upon Thy feeble children of mortality. Holy Father! suffer me not in the moment of thoughtlessness to be led astray from the path of Thy commandments; above all, suffer me not wilfully and intentionally to yield to any temptation to sin. May I never, through sinful confidence in my own powers, place myself in the way of trial. May I carefully observe the first inroads of sin, and in no instance think of disobedience to Thy law as otherwise than destructive. O! gracious Father, for those who are totally forgetful of Thee, who live without attention to the voice of conscience and to the commands of the Gospel, I pray that they may perceive their sins and their danger, and immediately and earnestly endeavour, by timely repentance, to regain Thy forfeited favour. Grant that I may never rest satisfied with anything short of unreserved obedience to Thy holy will. May christian principle take a more full and complete possession of my mind; and may it become the object of my highest aim to comply with those terms of peace and pardon which are declared to us in the Gospel of Thy Son. O! gracious God, preserve me, I entreat Thee, from all influence of evil opinions, evil customs, and evil examples. May I cultivate that lively abhorrence of sin which will aid in preserving me from its fatal snares; and may I never forget that the example and conduct of others will furnish no excuse for me when I appear before Thy holy tribunal. May I not, through foolish pride, omit the steady employment of those means of duty which I possess. While I pray for holiness, may my exertions be honestly directed to the attainment of it. May I aim to acquire correct views of duty, and in all things learn to submit to its guidance. The hopes which Thou hast set before me to

encourage my feeble endeavours, the gracious promises which Thou hast made to faithful, though imperfect obedience, claim my heartfelt praise; but, O! my Father, impress upon my mind a lively apprehension of those destructive consequences of sin which Jesus has pointed out to my fears. Unseduced by the allurements of interest or of pleasure, may I shun the broad path which leadeth to destruction; and, having chosen the good part, may I be finally owned by my great Master as His faithful servant. Grant these best of blessings, Heavenly Father, which I supplicate as the disciple of Thy well-beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.



FRIDAY EVENING.

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Luke xxiv., 32.—And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures !

T was the evening of our Lord's resurrection, when two disciples were walking to Emmaus. They left behind them the great city, the holiness of which seemed to have departed, and with whose festive sounds they could not sympathize. They did not even seek those who had followed their Lord with them. He was gone; and the tidings the women brought, that he was risen, seemed to them but as an idle tale, awakening them more sensibly to the reality of their loss. They communed together and reasoned; and as they walked they were sad; when Jesus appeared to them, but either in another form (Mark xvi., 12), or their eyes were holden; for they knew him not. He enquired the cause of their grief; he gently rebuked them for their faithlessness, and opened to them the Scriptures. Still they were unconscious of his presence, though he spake as never man spake, till, as he sat at their table, he took bread and blessed, and brake, and gave unto them. The tones of

heavenly blessing reminded them of the times when they had before beheld him breaking and distributing that good gift of God, which was a faint emblem of himself; and their eyes were opened, and they knew him, but only to behold him depart; and they said one to another, "Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

The hearts of the disciples burned when they were with their Lord whom they loved; so may ours, for he has not deserted us. They had just been thinking and speaking of him before he met them; let us, in like manner, invite his presence into our hearts. And as we walk in the way of life, which is often a sad one, his spirit shall open to us the mysterious page of God's dealings; the handwriting in the books of nature and of grace shall no more appear unknown characters; he shall commune with us of light, and life, and love; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough place shall be smooth; all things shall be become new; our hearts will burn within us; all selfishness and distrust shall be consumed; and the best emotions of the soul shall be kindled into a sacrifice acceptable to God. We shall no more be slow of heart to believe; and when our rapturous musings shall have ceased, and the glow of heavenly joy shall for a time have cooled, we shall yet return to our Jerusalem with hearts purified by the refiner's fire, and gladdened by the divine presence; and we shall be enabled to declare to our fellow disciples the loving kindness of the Lord.

HATH not thy heart within thee burned
At evening's calm and holy hour,
As if its inmost depths discerned
The presence of a loftier power?

Hast thou not heard, 'mid forest glades,
While ancient rivers murmured by,
A voice from forth the eternal shades,
That spake a present Deity?

And as upon the sacred page,
Thy eye in rapt attention turned
O'er records of a holier age,
Hath not thy heart within thee burned?

It was the voice of God, that spake
In silence to thy silent heart,—
And bade each worthier thought awake,
And every dream of earth depart.

As they who once with Jesus trod,
With kindling breast his accents heard,
But knew not that the Son of God
Was uttering every burning word;—

Father of Jesus! thus Thy voice
Speaks to our heart in tones divine;
Our spirits tremble and rejoice,
But know not that the voice is Thine.

Still be Thy hallowed accents near!
To doubt and passion whisper peace;
Direct us on our journey here,
Then bid, in heaven, our wanderings cease.

P R A Y E R.

How often, blessed Father, hast Thou spoken unto us, and we knew Thee not! In how many voices hast Thou called to us, and we have not obeyed! At how many times hast Thou been very near unto us, when we knew not Thee! How often have we cried, in longing helplessness and in bitter sorrow, as though Thou hadst for ever forsaken us; and lo! Thou wast in our midst, and wast sending the very things which hid Thee from us! Thy ways, Father, are not as our ways. Therefore I will fully trust Thy love; for my own ways I love not; I feel that they are laid in vanity and ignorance and weakness and iniquity, and end in shame and sorrow. Open my eyes, I pray Thee, that I may see Thy presence, and trust Thy wisdom and Thy love. If this day I have felt Thee with me, and the thought of heaven has been present to my soul, and Thy words of peace have calmed my troubled spirit, and the voice of duty I have heard, and welcomed Thy inward call,—depart not from me, O! Thou that ever art the same. Let not the slumbers of this night work forgetfulness of the hopes and resolutions of the day. Let not the cares of daily toil drive from my breast the cares of heavenly concern. Ever let my heart burn with holy zeal and pure affection; so that in all times I may serve Thee, and each day feel the peace of heavenly trust, and the joy of glad obedience to Thy will. Take care of all whom Thou hast united to me in the bonds of love; and be with us all evermore, through our risen and glorified Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

SATURDAY MORNING.

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Phil. iii., 13, 14.—Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

 HERE is the moment for pausing? At what hour may the child of God, having such a work as His to do, and such obstacles to hinder him, say to himself, It is enough, I will cease from my labour? At what age may man, with his eye on his Master, and his hope on heaven, lay down the staff of his pilgrimage, and say, I have attained; I have reached the stature of my Lord, and my soul may rest from toil?

Not while it is recorded that the prince of the Apostles, —the inspired, the indefatigable Paul,—felt himself at a distance from perfection, and feared to stop in his attainments. Not while man's life is likened in the Gospel to a race; for he that pauses must lose it. Not while it is called in Scripture a warfare; for he that lays down his arms, or sleeps upon his post, before the warfare is accomplished, suffers for infidelity or treason. Not while sin is in the world, and temptation abounds, and the love of

many waxes cold. No : the pilgrimage of toil and duty must go on, while the heart throbs and the pulse beats, without intermission, without fainting, steadily, resolutely. Through the desert it may be ; but God is there, giving water from the rock and meat from heaven ; and who, then, will faint at the prospect ? In perils and straights it may be ; but God is in the midst, with the cloudy pillar of His providence and grace ; and who, then, will shrink from the way ? Among enemies, in fearful and banded array, it may be ; but who will tremble at their power, that is protected by the shield of faith, and armed by the sword of the spirit, and led toward the promised land by the captain of his salvation ? Let the believing pilgrim then go on ; without halting, without looking back, without distrust ; onward, onward,—till the way-worn feet stand on the borders of the Jordan, and the bright inheritance is seen at hand. Then, as it is written, “the feet of them that bear the ark shall stand still ;” then the children of God may rest from their watchings and toils ; and having past the dark river, in whose swelling waters the grace of God shall bear them up, they shall go every one to the place prepared for him from the foundation of the world.

AWAKE, my soul, stretch every nerve,
And press with vigour on !
A heavenly race demands thy zeal,
And an immortal crown.

A cloud of witnesses around
Hold thee in full survey ;
Forget the steps already trod,
And onward urge thy way.

'Tis God's all-animating voice
That calls thee from on high;
'Tis His own hand presents the prize
To thine aspiring eye:—

That prize, with peerless glories bright,
Which shall new lustre boast,
When victors' wreaths, and monarchs' gems
Shall blend in common dust.

PRAYER.

FATHER, all perfect, all holy, but all loving! Once more I awake to life and duty; and the sorrowful struggles of my heart must still go on. Thou hast once more called me to the strife of temptation, and to the eagerness of hopeful interests, and to the gaining of fresh heights of holiness. Thou hast once more bid me accept the conditions of heavenly blessings. Lord, I feel sometimes weighed down with sadness; for even when I have taken confidence in the peace of trustful service, and have sealed my inheritance, the evil temptations of the past rise up and trouble me; and I flee from them, and reach forth unto those things that are before; but Thou givest me to possess the sins of my youth. Father, I accept whatever discipline Thou appointest for me; but O! in Thy mercy save me from the deeds of darkness, and the corruptions of my former self. Lord, I would be a new creature. I desire no partial enjoyment of my former unhallowed ways. Never suffer me to have peace in evil doing. Never

allow me to rest on my oars in the dangerous calms of life. O! create a clean heart and renew a right spirit within me. Nearer and nearer still, O! Father, may each day bring me to my home. In Thy felt presence may all the suggestions of evil be readily overcome. In Thy strength may I find that I can do all that Thou commandest. And in Thy love may I find the rich reward of all strife and sorrow, and the peaceful joy that seals my hope of heaven. Lead me, O! Father, thitherward; and Thine shall be the praise for ever, through the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.



SATURDAY EVENING.

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Acts i., 9.—A cloud received him out of their sight.



WHAT a moment was that! For a time the Apostles would be filled with astonishment and rapture; their thoughts would be carried with Jesus in a sort of ecstasy; but as they silently returned to their home they would miss the sweetly-solemn tones of him to whom, but a few minutes before, they had reverently listened. He was no longer with them—the guide, the friend, and the instructor—and their mortal eyes would no more behold him.

Have we ever felt the void when we have lost a friend? Think, then, what it must have been to have lost *Jesus*!

Let us go with them to their "large upper room." Perhaps it was that into which Jesus had entered with his, "Peace be unto you," as they sat at meat. Perhaps the very chamber in which he eat the last supper with them. They would never see him there again! Did they give themselves up to selfish grief, or did they strive to lose the sense of their bereavement by unseasonable merriment? Did they make light of it, and go their way? No! In company with the women, and Mary, the mother of Jesus,

they continued, with one accord, in prayer and supplication. What a blessing it is when the bereaved know where to go! Prayer was no novelty to them! their Lord had taught them how to pray; and when he was gone they benefit by the lesson. And they continued "of one accord." They are separated from Jesus, but are drawn more closely to one another. Prayer binds them together. A common object of attachment, Christ, unites them in fellowship; and so they continue till the day of Pentecost; when, being of one accord in one place, the spirit descends upon them! And now the period of retirement and suspense is ended; ten days' seclusion passed in prayer, in meditation, and in the interchange of brotherly affection, had done its work. The spirit is poured upon their chastened minds. The comforter, which their master had promised, brings his words to their remembrance. They are now with him more than ever. He is absent in body, yet they are present with their Lord. They are fully reconciled to his removal. Though now they saw him not, yet believing, they rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. They would not, if they could, call Jesus back again to earth; they rather longed to rejoin him in heaven.

Have any been removed from us whom we have loved with a holy affection, less only than that which the disciples had for their Lord? Has a cloud, perhaps to us a *dark* one, received them out of our sight? May they so dwell with *us* in spirit;—may they so draw us to them;—and may our affections be raised from things beneath, to those above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God!

THE hour must come!—the closest ties
Which bind to earth will sever'd be;
To Thee, O! God, we lift our eyes,
And seek our rest in heaven and Thee.

The tears of nature, gracious Lord!
Thou wilt with pitying eye behold:
And faith in Thine eternal word
Its heavenly prospects will unfold.

The hour will come when endless day
Shall chase the darkness of the grave:
Jesus, who trod the gloomy way,
Hath power from death itself to save.

The hour will come.—the closest ties
Which bound on earth shall be renewed;
When all shall live that sanctifies;
And all that sullies be subdued.

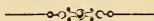
Then shall we see the loved we leave;
Rejoin the friends who've gone before:
United bliss from Thee receive;
And dwell with Jesus evermore.

O! may this cheering prospect guide
In friendship's duties, friendship's joys;
In faith and love our souls abide,
And follow duty's sacred voice!

PRAYER.

O! THOU blessed and only Potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords, Thou only hast immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto! No man hath seen Thee nor can see Thee. We look to Thy throne, and behold the cloud and darkness which surround it. But when Thou givest of Thine immortality to the sons of men, they feel themselves Thy children, and draw nigh to Thee, their Heavenly Father; and then they behold the goodness and truth which go before Thy face. I thank Thee, Father, that Thou didst cause Thy grace and truth to dwell among us; that, through the veil of flesh, Thy love shone forth in Jesus, Thy son; that he lived in the sight of his brethren, and manifested Thy glory; and that when he who was from heaven ascended to Thee, and the cloud received him from the eyes of affection, he is still revealed to those who love him and keep his commandments. Thou kind and good God, with what mercies Thou hast crowned the week which is now closing. Thou hast caused clouds which threatened me to disperse, and some which I dreaded have proved to be full of Thy blessings. I thank Thee for the hours of light, and also for those of darkness; that at times Thou hast permitted me to see clearly, and that Thou hast bid me trust in Thee hopefully; that Thou hast revealed Thy love in my own heart, and in the affection of my friends, and hast exercised my faith by the passing cloud. And now, whilst sleep enshrouds me, may Thy goodness sustain my life, preserve me for Thy

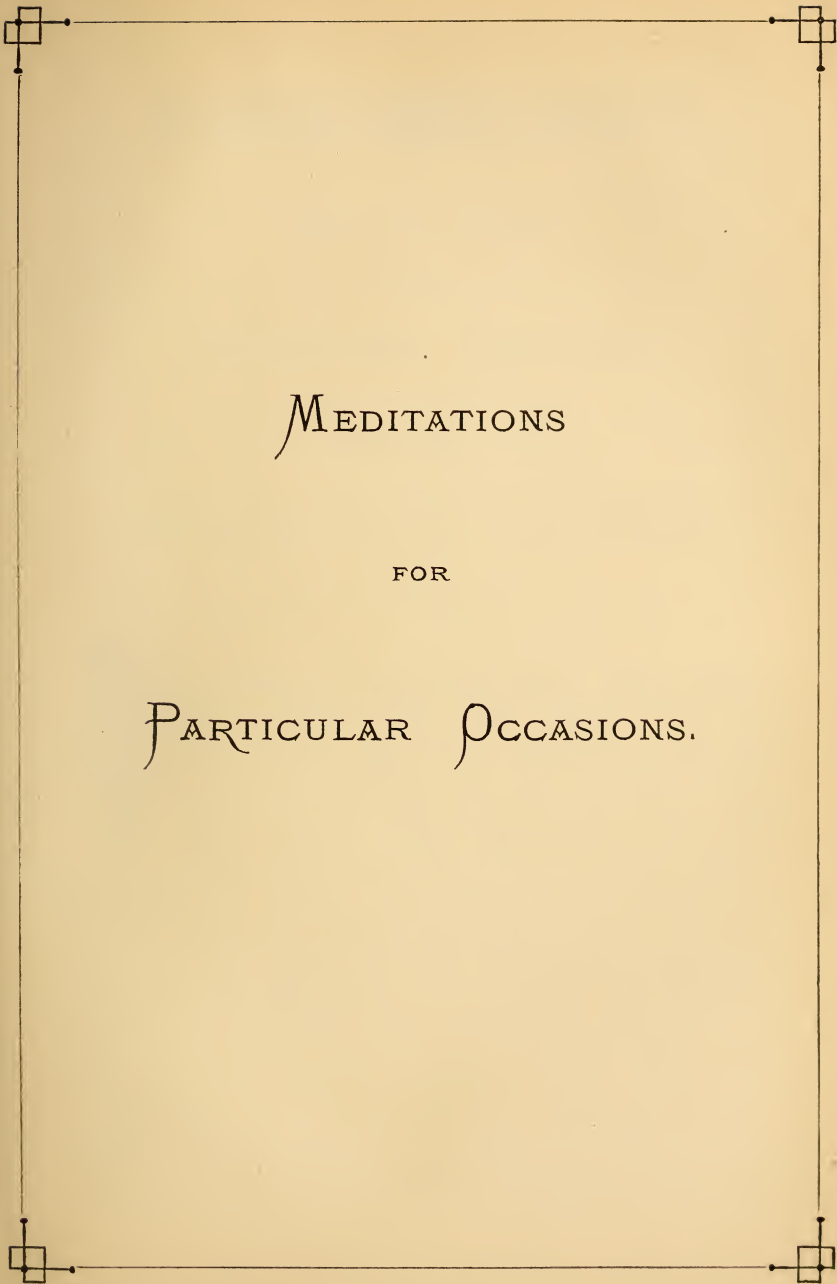
service, and my friends for the joy of my heart and the welfare of my soul. If Thou wakest me on earth, may it be for the holy work of the Lord's day; if Thou wakest me with the final awakening, may it find me above the clouds, to be for ever with the Lord. Unite me and mine in the bonds of that holy love which shall make us Thy children—members of Thy holy family—heirs of eternal blessedness with Thy dear Son, our Saviour. Amen.



To sum up all in a word, wait patiently, trust humbly, depend wholly upon, seek solely to a God of light and love, of mercy and goodness, of glory and majesty, ever dwelling in the inmost depth and spirit of your soul. There you have all the secret, hidden, invisible upholder of all the creation, whose blessed operation will always be found by a faithful, humble, loving, calm, patient introversion of your heart to Him, who has His hidden heaven within you, and which will open itself to you, as soon as your heart is left wholly to His eternal, ever-speaking word, and ever-sanctifying spirit within you.

LAW.





MEDITATIONS

FOR

PARTICULAR OCCASIONS.



MEDITATIONS
FOR
PARTICULAR OCCASIONS.

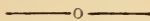
INVITATION TO THE LORDS' SUPPER.

ALL Christian people must come. They, indeed, that are in the state of sin, must not come so; but yet they must come. First they must quit their state of death, and then partake of the bread of life. They that are at enmity with their neighbours must come; that is no excuse for their not coming; only they must not bring their enmity along with them, but leave it, and then come. They that have variety of secular employments must come; only they must leave their secular thoughts and affections behind them, and then come and converse with God. If any man be well grown in grace, he must needs come, because he is excellently disposed to so holy a feast; but he that is but in the infancy of piety, had need to come, that so he may grow in grace. The strong must come, lest they become weak; and the weak, that they may

become strong. The sick must come to be cured, the healthful to be preserved. They that have leisure, must come, because they have no excuse; they that have no leisure, must come hither, that by so excellent religion they may sanctify their business. The penitent sinners must come, that they may be justified; and they that are justified, that they may be justified still. They that have fears and great reverence for these mysteries, and think no preparation to be sufficient, must receive, that they may learn how to receive the more worthily; and they that have a less degree of reverence, must come often to have it heightened; that, as those creatures that live amongst the snows of the mountains, turn white with their food and conversation with such perpetual whitenesses; so our souls may be transformed into the similitude and union with Christ, by our perpetual feeding on him, and conversation, not only in his courts, but in his very heart, and most secret affections, and incomparable purities.



PREPARATION FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER.



NO man must dare to approach the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper if he be in a state of any one sin, that is, unless he have entered in the state of repentance, that is, of sorrow and amendment; lest it be said concerning him, as it was concerning Judas, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.

Every communicant must first have examined himself, that is, tried the condition and state of his soul, searched out the secret ulcers, inquired out its weaknesses and indiscretions, and all those aptnesses where it is exposed to temptation; that by finding out its diseases he may find a cure; and by discovering its aptnesses he may secure its present purposes of future amendment, and may be armed against dangers and temptations.

In this affair let no man deceive himself, and weep for his sins by way of solemnity and ceremony, and still retain the affection; but he that comes to this feast must have on the wedding garment, that is, he must put on Jesus Christ; and he must have put off the old man, with his affections and lusts; and he must be wholly conformed to Christ in the image of his mind. For then we have put on Christ, when our souls are clothed with his righteous-

ness; when every faculty of our soul is proportioned and vested according to the pattern of Christ's life. Remember always, that after a great sin, or after a habit of sins, a man is not soon made clean; and no unclean thing must come to this feast. It is not the preparation of two or three days that can fit a person for this banquet; nothing can prepare us for it but what can unite us to Christ and to our Heavenly Father.

When we have this general and indispensably necessary preparation, we are to make our souls more adorned and trimmed up with circumstances of pious actions and special devotions, setting apart some portion of our time immediately before the day of solemnity, according as our great occasions will permit; and this time is especially to be spent in actions of repentance, confession of our sins, renewing our purposes of holy living, praying for pardon of our failings, and for those graces which may prevent the like sadnesses for the time to come; meditation upon the passion, and the infinite love of God; and indefinitely in all acts of virtue which may build our souls up into a temple fit for the reception of Christ himself, and the inhabitation of the Holy Spirit.

The celebration of the holy sacrament must suppose us in the love of God, and in charity with all the world; and, therefore, we must, before every communion especially, remember what differences or jealousies are between us and any one else, and recompose all disunions, and cause right understandings between each other; offering to satisfy whom we have injured, and to forgive them who have injured us, without thoughts of resuming the quarrel when the solemnity is over; for that is but to rake the embers in light and fantastic ashes; it must be quenched,

and a holy flame enkindled; no fires must be at all, but the fires of love and zeal; and the altar of incense will send up a sweet perfume.

When the day of the feast is come, lay aside all cares and impertinences of the world, and remember that this is thy soul's day, a day of traffic and intercourse with heaven. Arise early in the morning. 1. Give God thanks for the approach of so great a blessing. 2. Confess thy own unworthiness to receive it. 3. Then remember and deplore thy sins which have made thee so unworthy. 4. Then confess God's goodness, and take sanctuary there, and upon Him place thy hopes; 5. And invite Him to thee with renewed acts of love, of holy desire, of hatred of his enemy,—sin. 6. Make oblation of thyself wholly to be disposed by Him, to the obedience of Him, to his providence and possession; and pray Him to enter and dwell there for ever. And after this, with joy and holy fear, and the forwardness of love, address thyself to communion with Him, to whom, and by whom, and for whom, all faith, and all hope, and all love, in the whole catholic church, both in heaven and earth, is designed.

In the act of receiving, exercise faith with much confidence and resignation. Dispute not concerning the manner of Christ's presence with thee; it is sufficient to thee that Christ shall be present to thy soul, as an instrument of grace, as a pledge of the resurrection, as the earnest of glory and immortality, and a means of many intermedial blessings, even all such as are necessary for thee, and are in order to thy salvation. And to make all this good to thee, there is nothing necessary on thy part but a holy life, and a true belief of all the sayings of Christ.

Fail not at this solemnity, according to the custom of pious and devout people, to make an offering to God for uses of religion and the poor, according to thy ability. For when Christ feasts his body, let us also feast our fellow members, who have a right to the same promises, and are partakers of the same sacrament, and partners of the same hope, and cared for under the same Providence, and descended from the same common parents, and whose Father God is, and Christ is their elder brother. If thou chancest to communicate where this holy custom is not observed publicly, supply that want by thy private charity; but offer it to God at His holy table, at least by thy private designing it there.

When you have received, pray and give thanks. Pray for all estates of men; for they also have an interest in the body of Christ, whereof they are members; and you, in conjunction with Christ, whom then you have received, are more fit to pray for them in the celebration of this holy rite. Give thanks for the passion of our dearest Lord, and beg of God, that by a holy perseverance in well doing you may from shadows pass on to substances, from the typical and transient to the real and eternal supper of the Lamb.

After the solemnity is done, let Christ dwell in your hearts by faith, and love, and obedience, and conformity to his life and death; put Christ on you, and conform every faculty of your soul and body to his holy image and perfection. Remember that you should be now one with Christ; and, therefore, when you are to do an action, consider how Christ did, or would do the like, and do you imitate his example, and understand all his commandments, and choose all that he propounded, and desire

his promises, and fear his threatenings, and contract his friendships; for then do you every day communicate; especially when Christ thus dwells in you, and you in Christ, growing up towards a perfect man in Christ Jesus.

Do not instantly, upon your return from church, return also to the world, and secular thoughts and employments; but let the remaining parts of that day be like a post communion, or an after office, holding holy converse with your blessed Lord, acquainting him with all your needs, revealing to him all your needs, and opening all your infirmities; and as the affairs of your person or employment call you off, so retire again to pious intercourse with your beloved guest.



MEDITATION AT THE LORD'S SUPPER.

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“This do in remembrance of me.”

 GAIN do I partake of this blessed feast of my Lord, which unites us with him, and brings him to us in his trials, his sufferings, and his dying love. How beautiful is the thought, that he wished that men for whom he died should, by this simple act, cherish his memory, not only as their benefactor, but as one who shared with them the feelings of friendship, as one who desired their love and sympathy! It may be that when our Saviour first ordained this mode of remembering him, he thought only of his Apostles, who had been the chosen companions of his ministry; but afterwards, when he was glorified, and had received into his heart's love not only the “lost sheep of the house of Israel,” but *all* the wandering ones, *all* the children of his Father,—then he desired that they too should have awakened towards him the tender feelings of social love, and therefore made an especial communication of his wishes to the last, but not least of the Apostles, who must have been peculiarly dear to him, as the sinner who, through him, had repented.

How inspiring the thought, that I am now uniting with myriads of my fellow Christians in an act of love to that Saviour through whom we have the greatest blessings we enjoy,—by whom we have access to the throne of grace,—who has revealed to us the Father of our spirits, and kindled in our souls that immortal flame which is to burn with a purer lustre in the presence of God, through the countless ages of eternity! I eat of this bread, and drink of this wine, in remembrance of Jesus, of his body which was broken for us, of his blood which was shed for us. And what recollections arise to my mind of all he did and taught and suffered for us! Each event of his life awakens within me new love and gratitude,—new conviction that he was indeed the beloved Son of God,—that it was he who was to call men from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, to give them the assurance of pardon and eternal life; and I thank my God that He sent us such heavenly messages by so divine a messenger. But these memorials before me lead me peculiarly to dwell on this crowning act of love and obedience, and on the scenes of tender friendship and of deep anguish which preceded it. Here I feel his presence near me, and with his image, every blessing of his faith and hope rises brightly to view. Here he demands my deepest sympathy, my warmest love, my devoted obedience. Here would I resolve henceforth better to show my remembrance of him, by listening to his words and obeying his commands,—here would I lay aside all earnest desires but that of sharing with him the presence of his Father and our Father. O! may this blessed hour shed its influence over my future life, and may I go on my way rejoicing, with Jesus ever near me.

According to thy gracious word,
In meek humility,
This will I do, my dying Lord,
I will remember thee.

Thy body, broken for my sake,
My bread from heaven shall be;
Thy testamental cup I take,
And thus remember thee.

Gethsemane can I forget?
Or there thy conflict see,
Thine agony and bloody sweat,
And not remember thee?

When to the Cross I turn mine eyes,
And rest on Calvary,
O! Lamb of God, our sacrifice,—
I must remember thee.

Remember thee, and all thy pains,
And all thy love to me;
Yea, while a breath, a pulse remains,
Will I remember thee.

And when these failing lips grow dumb,
And mind and memory flee,
When thou shalt in thy kingdom come,
Jesus remember me!

P R A Y E R.

LORD! Thou never forgettest us. Thou art mindful of Thy promises, while we think not of Thee. Thou preventest us by Thy grace, when we are nigh unto sin and destruction. I bless Thee that Thou hast thus far kept us near Thee. O! what a sweet thought it is, that so many are united with us around the table of Thy Son, whether in the body or out of the body, still one with us in Thee and him! I thank Thee for the outward bond, but far more for the One Spirit into which Thou baptizest us. O! that we may remember Thee in our daily life; that Thy Son may be with us in our daily pilgrimage; that Thy Spirit may be our guard in the daily trials of life and duty! O! never suffer the spirit of sinful forgetfulness to usurp the throne of Thy loved sovereignty; but by Thy warnings, by Thy chastisements, by Thy helps, and by all Thy mercies, keep us in the knowledge of Thee, and in the remembrance of Thy Son. Amen.



MEDITATION AFTER THE LORD'S SUPPER.

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WE have now made an open acknowledgment of our belief in Christ. We have recognised his claims on our love and obedience. Is faith dead? Do we mean nothing by our professions? Has not each one here been communing with his own heart, and been silently resolving that the time past of his life shall have sufficed to have worked iniquity? We trust in the promises of mercy on forgiveness through Christ. Is this trust barren and unprofitable? We believe that he whose death we are now commemorating rose again,—is that nothing to us? Are we not sure that as he lives we shall live also; and that whether that future life is to be one of joy, or clouded by sorrow, depends on the way in which we have our conversation in the world? We *may* indeed have been eating to our own hurt. If with all these solemn considerations before us we are unaffected, cold, or indifferent as to our salvation, careless of God and of our own souls,—we may be sure that our condition is a melancholy one, and these neglected means of grace will rise as witnesses to condemn us. But let us examine ourselves. Surely our hearts must be now quickened by a love of Christ. Could we have walked with him, witnessed his deeds of mercy, beheld his entire

self-devotion, without being affected? Could we have sat round the paschal table, received from him the bread and wine which he had blessed, heard his warnings, partaken of his consolations, foreseen his danger, witnessed his agony, beheld his patience under cruel mockings and scourgings, looked on him as he hung on the cross, and yet not have been moved with virtuous emotions?

He now "is gone above the skies,
Where our weak senses reach him not,—
And earthly objects court our eyes,
To thrust our Saviour from our thought."

But, by this rite, we hold him dear in remembrance; our memory is refreshed, our feelings are quickened. What a holy peace can he bestow on the contrite heart! How calm the rest he offers to the humble and repentant! How fearful, indeed, the doom of the daringly impenitent? But how easy the yoke, how light the burden, which those have to bear who follow him! And then that peace and calm hope will be ours; if we have loved him on earth, in heaven shall we behold him, when faith shall be lost in sight.

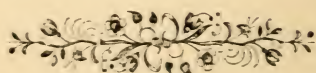
FROM the table now retiring,
Which for us the Lord hath spread,
May our souls, refreshment finding,
Grow in all things like their Head.

His example by beholding,
May our lives his image bear;
Him our Lord and Master calling,
His commands may we revere.

Love to God and man displaying,
Walking steadfast in thy way,—
Joy attend us in believing!
Peace from God through endless day!

PRAYER.

FATHER! I bless Thee for the privilege we have had in meeting around Thy Son's table. I thank Thee for all our opportunities of recalling the scenes of our Saviour's life and death, and of quickening our pure affections and heavenly hopes. They are indeed means of grace to us! Lord, may we not be as those who do not thus taste of Thy love. But let us shew them, I entreat Thee, by our greater earnestness and humility, that it has been good for us to be at Thy Son's table. May the death of Christ be so shewn forth in our lives, that many may take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus, and may thus be led to glorify Thee, our Father in Heaven. Thus work in us, I entreat Thee, that we may be blessings to those to whom Christ hath united us as brethren; and finally may we be joined as a holy brotherhood around Thy throne. Hear me through Thy love in Jesus, Thy Son. Amen.



CHRISTMAS DAY.

—o—

Luke ii., 13, 14.—And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

OW beautiful is this emblem of the interest of heaven in the affairs of earth; what an expression of that love which binds the moral universe together, as attraction the material!

If "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," at the creation, how much more should praise be given, that now the moral wreck and chaos were about to be restored to order, and men to become new creatures! Or, if "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth," how much livelier the jubilee when the Saviour was born, to call sinners to repentance, and reconcile the world to God! How rapturous must have been the thanksgivings to Him who is the original and uncreated Source of all good, mercy and truth; and who so loved the world that He sent His Son to save it!

The angels sang praises to God for the Messenger He was now sending to bless the world. Worship is one of

the highest acts of man or angel ; and an intimation, as it were, is given here that, under the new dispensation, idolatry was to come to an end, and glory and honour supreme to be given to whom alone they are due. Nor in vain. Earth is slowly preparing to echo back, one day, from all her green shores, and with the deep tone of her millions, the heavenly pæan,—Glory to God in the highest!

“And on earth peace.” Jesus was to be the Prince of Peace. It was one of his loftiest titles. Peace on earth, which has, heretofore, been such a Golgotha, might seem Utopian indeed, unless we consider the power of him who came to reign in human hearts and lives, and to bring every thought into captivity to himself. Filled with peace himself, he came to breathe it through all souls, quelling ambition, and anger, and revenge. He produces peace in the inner man, by harmonizing all the passions and appetites under the sway of conscience and reason, the voices of God ; peace in the world by the love of man to man, and universal equity ; peace and reconciliation towards God, by the revelation of His mercy to the penitent offender, and His wise purposes in our trials and sorrows.

“Goodwill towards men.” From God to man, and from man to man. More than peace, there was to be benevolence, positive kindness, sympathy, and relief. Man was to mete out to others that love which God meted out to him. The Saviour went about doing good, and he calls all his followers to engage in the offices of philanthropy. His religion has been eminently a religion of benevolence, even in its past imperfect manifestations. It has founded hospitals and schools, and missions and ministries to the poor and lost. It has crossed the bounds of country and

colour, and scattered the best gifts of time and eternity over dark and oppressed lands. But the angelic triad,—Piety, Peace, and Benevolence,—has but just begun to take effect. What happiness and glory, then, may we not expect from its future and hastening consummation!

O LOVELY voices of the sky,
That hymned the Saviour's birth!
Are ye not singing still on high,
Ye that sang "Peace on earth!"
To us yet speak the strains
Wherewith, in days gone by,
Ye bless'd the Syrian swains.
O voices of the sky!

O clear, and shining light, whose beams
That hour heaven's glory shed
Around the palms, and o'er the streams,
And on the shepherd's head!
Be near through life and death.
As in that holiest night
Of hope, and joy, and faith,
O clear and shining light!

O star which led to him, whose love
Brought hope and mercy free!
Where art Thou? Mid the host above
May we still gaze on thee?
In heaven thou art not set.
Thy rays earth might not dim;
Send them to guide us yet,
O star which led to him!

PRAYER.

O! THOU infinite and eternal Mind;—Father of the spirits of all that live,—God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;—Thee I adore. To Thee, supreme eternal One, Who hast made us in Thine own image, and Who didst send thy holy child Jesus that he might be to us a Prince and a Saviour;—to Thee, who by him art calling us to glory and virtue and immortality with Thyself;—to Thee I look up with the deepest awe, the profoundest veneration, and the tenderest love. On this blessed morning I would unite my heart and voice with all I love, with the whole Christian church who are celebrating the birthday of Thy holy Son, our Saviour, and join my grateful ascriptions with theirs for him, Thy most precious, Thy unspeakable gift. Father of our immortal natures! as Jesus was emphatically Thy child, by the full measure that was in him of Thy holy spirit, help me, I pray Thee, that I may also be Thy child, by my large and ever growing possession of that same spirit. O! help me to live under that constant sense of my relation to Thee, which will be to me a perpetual security against every thought and feeling inconsistent with the principles and spirit of the children of God. I would ask for no power, except the power to overcome every temptation and to do all Thy holy will. I would be anxious for no possession, but that of a conscience void of offence toward Thee and man. I would seek for no honour, except the honour of standing approved in Thy sight; and I would hope for no happiness, but that of serving and obeying Thee now and for

ever. Father! may Thy will be done in me, with me, and by me, in all things, as it is done in Heaven; may the life which I live in the flesh continually be by faith in him, that well-beloved Son, in whom Thou wast well pleased,—who died to redeem us from all iniquity, and who lives our Mediator, our undying friend, with Thyself in everlasting glory. Through Thy mercy in him forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and being born again by the power of Thy word within us,—of that truth which liveth and abideth for ever, may we all so pass through the trials of earth and time that when he, Thy holy child Jesus, once on earth an infant, shall appear as our final judge, we may appear with him in the number of the redeemed, and the sharers of his blessedness. And to Thee, his Father and our Father, his God and our God, shall be the praise and the adoration, and the thanksgiving for ever. Amen.



GOOD FRIDAY.

—o—

John xiv., 30.—It is finished.

HE great work of man's redemption was accomplished; the Saviour of men had finished the work which was given him to do!

Holy men of old had desired to see this day, but were not able. Moses and the prophets had told of it, and had blended with their prophetic announcements of the Messiah's power and glory words, to many hearts, perhaps even to their own, dark and mysterious, which declared his humiliation and death. Jesus had fulfilled "in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself;"—he knew that "the Christ must suffer, to enter into his glory."

The beloved Son of God had delivered the whole message of his Father to mankind; and as he had been sent into the world, even so had he also sent into the world them whom the Father had given him. He who was "the Way, the Truth, and the Life," had led them to the Father; he had filled their once-beclouded souls with the clear and certain conviction that he came forth from God, and had given them all the words of eternal life to carry to mankind. The message of love and mercy was completed.

All his labours were accomplished. He had worked the works of Him who sent him while it was day; he had done not his own will, but the will of his Father; he had shrunk from no difficulty, avoided no peril; he had not called legions of angels to his aid, though he knew that they would instantly have attended his summons; but he had relied on the strength afforded by the consciousness of his Father's presence, and had lived after the power of an eternal life. The night had now come when all must be finished, and he slept in death to awake in glory.

His sufferings were over! He had chosen a life of privation and trial; "houseless, sole, forlorn," he had not even where to lay his head; the desert and the mountain had been his places of rest; he had proved all that humanity most shrinks from; his bodily sufferings, in themselves most agonizing, had been increased tenfold by the mental distress occasioned by the desertion of his followers, the wilful rejection of the chosen people, the aggravating insults of his persecutors, and the knowledge of the calamities which their sins would bring on his beloved nation. He had prayed that the cup might pass from him; it had not been removed, but he was strengthened to drink it. Can we stand by his cross and look on him who was pierced,—can we behold sufferings, the mere contemplation of which drew from his holy brow large drops of mortal sweat like as of blood,—without admiring thankfulness that they were borne by a Son of Man with the meek prayer, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"—that by him suffering has been hallowed, and that he has taught us that pain and sorrow are marks of the Father's love, since they were appointed for the best-beloved? Can we withhold from

him our warmest love and gratitude, that he willingly endured suffering, shame, and death, that by his stripes we might be healed—that he, “the holy one and the just,” laid down his life for the guilty and wandering, that he might bring them back to the ways of righteousness, and raise many sons to glory?

His Father did not forsake him in those hours of mortal anguish; as He had borne witness to his filial obedience in life, so did He in death. The deep gloom of a supernatural darkness shrouded the struggles of expiring nature;—the shivering of rocks, the quaking of the earth, and the rending of the veil of the Holy of Holies, announced the awful moment when all was finished. But Jesus conquered death; soon was he to be “declared the Son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead,” and exalted to the right hand of his Father’s throne to dwell for evermore.

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Bound upon the accursed tree,  
Faint and bleeding, who is he?  
By the cheek so pale and worn,  
By the crown of twisted thorn,  
By the side so deeply pierced,  
By the baffled, burning thirst,  
By the drooping, death-dewed brow,  
Son of Man! 'tis thou! 'tis thou!

Bound upon the accursed tree,  
Dread and awful, who is he?  
By the sun at noon-day pale,  
Shivering rocks, and rending veil,  
By earth that trembles at his doom,  
By the saints who burst their tomb,  
Low before thee, Lord, we bow;  
Son of God! 'tis thou! 'tis thou!

Bound upon the accursed tree,  
Sad and dying, who is he?  
By the last and bitter cry,  
The life breathed out in agony;  
By the lifeless body laid  
In the chamber of the dead;  
Crucified! we know thee now!  
Son of Man! 'tis thou! 'tis thou!

Bound upon the accursed tree,  
Dread and awful, who is he?  
By the prayer for them that slew,  
"Lord, they know not what they do;"  
By the sealed and guarded cave;  
By the spoiled and empty grave;  
By that clear, immortal brow,  
Son of God! 'tis thou! 'tis thou!

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### PRAYER.

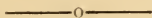
BLESSED be Thy name! O! Thou God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in all spiritual blessings in him. When stricken by the upbraiding of our consciences, and afraid of Thy presence, we feel the inestimable privilege of possessing a Mediator, who can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities; and we cling, with heartfelt gratitude, to Thy offers of pardon, which he hath sealed to us on the cross. Herein indeed is love, not that we loved Thee, but that Thou didst love us, and didst send Thy Son to be the propitiation for our sins. O! may I be the friend of him who shewed such love in dying for



me, by laying down my life daily for the welfare of my brethren. May I die to every sin and every vain desire, and henceforth devote myself wholly to Thy service and glory. And as Christ was raised from the dead by Thy mighty power, so may Thy Spirit raise me to newness of life, that I may henceforward run the heavenly race with full purpose of soul. Guide me, I entreat Thee; guard and protect me; strengthen and support me; enlighten and teach me; pardon and correct me; and lead me, daily, hourly, nearer unto the eternal kingdom of Thy Son. Amen.



## EASTER SUNDAY.



Rom. vi., 4.—That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

HEN the first Christians assembled together they welcomed each other with this salutation,—“The Lord is risen, he is risen indeed!” He is become the first fruits of them that sleep; he, first of all the sons of Adam, has conquered death, and inherited the promised blessing of eternal life. Can it be any matter of astonishment that those who were the witnesses of this mighty event, who knew that it set the seal of certainty on their own glorious destiny, should make it the continual and earnest theme of their preaching and writing? Is it not more a subject for wonder that so momentous an occurrence, that a day which is the birthday of the Christian’s hope, should be passed over, as it so often is, with but faint emotions of gratitude, with but feeble accents of praise?

But here the Apostle awakens in us, if possible, still higher thoughts; he kindles in our souls the imaginings of the glory of Him who hath been, is, and is to come, of Himself, alone,—of Him who filleth immensity with His

presence, yet hath deigned to breathe into man the breath of life : and then the Apostle tells us that this glory was exerted in raising to immortal life him who was the bright effulgence of eternal blessedness,—him who was called by the Father of all His well-beloved Son. These few words alone fill the soul with thoughts which strive to expand beyond the confines of this earthly tenement.

Yet even this is not all ; the Apostle does not stop here. He has so often assured us, and proved by the clearest reasoning, that the resurrection of Christ, our elder brother, is a pledge and promise of our own,—that the mention of the one recalls, unbidden, the blessed hope of the other ; now he adds another consideration. Our death unto sin and life unto holiness here below should be in strict conformity with that death and resurrection of our Saviour which is the pledge of our own. We are spiritually baptized unto his death, we must even be thus buried with him, “that like as he was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” And if our walking in newness of life can, in any manner, be compared to the resurrection of our Saviour, what an idea does it give us of the greatness, the surpassing importance of the change ! His body had lost all consciousness ; in the grave there is no remembrance. We are dead in trespasses and sin ; we live not, for life is to be with God, and we have alienated ourselves from Him by wicked works. To these we must die before we can live. But the early morning ray shone upon *him* from his Father’s glory, and he rose to inherit it :—the emanations from that glory, reflected from our Saviour, fall on *our* souls to awaken us to walk in that newness of life which is a foretaste of eternity.

Shall such a summons be sent to us in vain? Shall such light find no entrance into our souls? Shall the stone be rolled away, and we remain in the tomb?

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CHRIST, the Lord, is risen to-day,  
Sons of men and angels say!  
Raise your songs and triumphs high:  
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply!

Love's redeeming work is done;  
Fought the fight, the battle won:  
Lo! our sun's eclipse is o'er!  
Lo! he sets in blood no more!

Vain the stone, the watch, the seal;  
Christ hath burst the gates of hell:  
Death in vain forbids his rise;  
Christ hath opened Paradise.

Lives again our glorious king:  
Where, O death, is now thy sting?  
Made like him, like him we rise;  
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies!

Glorious bond of earth and heaven!  
Praise to thee by both be given!  
Thee we greet triumphant now:  
Hail! the Resurrection, thou!



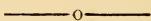
## P R A Y E R.

O! BLESSED Father, I thank Thee from the depths of my soul, and with the warmest gratitude of my heart, that on this glorious morning Thou didst call from the grave Thy well-beloved Son, never more to see corruption. Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that sleep ;—since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead. O! Father, how can I sufficiently praise Thee for this certain hope—this unspeakable gift? The loved ones that Thou hast given me are parted from me by the grave,—all is marked for death around me,—my own day of life hurries fast away,—the seal of mortality would be set on all, my spirit would sink under the weight of its sorrow, and I should remain weeping by the tomb of my hopes, unable even to know the voice of my Saviour! But the angel of Thy mercy has rolled away the stone ;—the Lord is risen,—he is risen indeed ;—he has shown himself still the same tender friend, the same kind Master, the same loving Saviour, though he has put off the garment of mortality ;—he is ascended unto his Father and our Father,—unto his God, and our God. Death is now swallowed up of life! All live unto Thee, O! Father. The veil which hid from us Thy presence hath been rent by him! All around me is no longer sealed by death,—but by life! O! Father, let

me live ever as unto Thee! Let the things of sense have no more dominion over me! And let the loved ones whom Thou hast removed from earth to Thine own immediate presence, be Thy ministering angels to watch over me, and lead me on to Thee! Open more clearly to my spiritual sight, I pray Thee, those heavenly mansions in the Father's house which he is gone to prepare for us, and there with him may we be for ever with Thee, O! Father. Amen.



## ASCENSION DAY.



Luke xxiv., 51.—And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

HEIR friend and Master had lived among them blessing them,—and now he was taken from them, he departed blessing them. How holy, how soothing to their sorrowing spirits, was this last intercourse which the first disciples had with their Saviour on earth! How unspeakably great was the blessing which then descended upon them! Their souls must have been raised, in exalted contemplation, to the eternal world, which was now receiving one who had dwelt among them as a man of sorrows; his dying words would give them the blissful assurance that where he was then going, his followers should be, for that he was preceding them to prepare a place for them; and his last earthly words were a blessing. For a time the blank must have been great to them when they saw him no more; yet was his very removal in wisdom and love. Their heavenly Father had received him to Himself, that by lifting *him* up He might draw their hearts to Him; He withdrew from them the light for a little while that they might, after a season, enjoy it in brightness inexpressible.

And how did they receive this last blessing of their Lord? They continued with one accord in prayer to God until He had revealed His will to them; thus they went forth, armed with a spirit of love and zeal, to work the work of their great Master; and they were supported by the power of his resurrection and ascension to discharge the most difficult duties, to shrink from no danger or difficulty.

Sometimes we too, his humble followers, who love a Lord we have not seen, are favoured with seasons of blessed intercourse with him and with our Heavenly Father. We appear to be in their immediate presence, and, like St. Paul, hear and see things of which no human tongue can tell. It seems good for us to be there, and fain would we build tabernacles on the Holy Mount, for a bright cloud overshadows us, and the fashion of our souls has been so changed by prayer that we have not feared to enter into it. But soon, while our holy delight is the greatest, when our Saviour seems coming to establish his kingdom in our souls, even then he is parted from us, and we are obliged to return to the things of earth again. Yet, though we appear to have lost him entirely from our sight, he departed blessing, and to bless us; and if we go on our way rejoicing, heavenly visitants will give us the assurance in our hearts, that, in like manner as he departed, he will come again.

As the Saviour was parted from his followers and friends, and was received by his Father into His more immediate presence, so doth our God often now remove from among us those whom we love,—those who have been our guides and supporters in this earthly pilgrimage; but He parts them from us while blessing us. They have been our comforters, they have led us in the road heaven-



ward; and, though now we see them no more, they continue to bless us, for their holy influence rests with us, and guides us in our earthly pilgrimage. God, too, is blessing us, perhaps we know not how; but we know that what now seemeth dark to us will be bright in that world where sorrow and sighing will be done away. Let us then, when, like the early followers of Christ, a friend and master is taken from us, be continually in the Temple of God's presence praising and blessing Him; and, from that holy communion with the Father of Spirits, we shall find strength to go on our way even rejoicing.

SEE our risen Lord ascending  
To behold his Father's face;  
All his earthly sorrows ending,  
Full of peace and love and grace;  
Hallelujah!  
Ever blessed be the Lord!

Ye, his followers, upward gazing  
Till his brightness dims your sight,  
Upward still your spirits raising,  
Dwell with him in heavenly light;  
Hallelujah!  
Joy, ye followers of the Lord!

Soon ye shall be with him ever;  
Here his spirit is your guide;  
Nought your faith from him shall sever:  
Nought the love of God shall hide.  
Hallelujah!  
Blest the presence of the Lord.

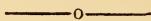
Christians! still with patience striving  
To obey the Lord ye love,  
Soon your glorious morn arriving,  
Ye shall dwell with him above;  
Hallelujah!  
Christians, haste to meet your Lord!

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### PRAYER.

OUR Father, Thou hast taken Thy Son Jesus unto Thyself, and Thou hast bid us trust that there are many mansions prepared for all who love his appearing. O! may the hope of heaven encourage me to every duty, and strengthen me to meet every trial. May the light from that better country cheer all the dark scenes of time. May I see Thy hand in every event, set Thee, the Lord, always before me, and be in Thy fear all my days. When I am allured by temptation, may I remember that Thou, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and who art our Judge, seest me. In the hours of solitude may I consider that I am not alone; that Thou, my Father and my God, art with me. Through every moment of this day may Thy precepts guide me, Thy fear control me, Thy love fill me with joy, and thy providence be my refuge and my trust. Through every day may I be with Thee, and when heart and flesh shall fail me, be Thou, O God, the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever, in that world where Thy presence will create fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore, to all who shall obtain Thy mercy unto eternal life, Thy gift in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

## THE SAVIOUR'S PROMISE.



Matthew xxviii., 20.—Lo, I am with you alway,  
even unto the end of the world.

OW supporting and encouraging a promise to that little band of chosen followers, who had assembled, their number diminished by one sad defection, on the distant mountain which their Master had appointed them, to hear his parting injunctions! These were not now his *dying* words,—he had passed from death unto life, and now would for ever live in the glory of his Father.

And is not this promise to *us* also,—to us who are some of those “other sheep” who are not of this earthly fold;—to us who have believed on the Saviour, through the word of his Apostles, and for whom he prayed that we might be one in him and in the Father. A deep gulf of time is between us and the sacred moment, when, on the hallowed mount, our beloved Master gave that promise to his disciples, and, with his now beatified body, sanctified the spot. Yet, through the abundant goodness of our Heavenly Father, who, in ways so marvellous, has preserved for us the record of that holy revelation, and made it now accessible to every heart,—we, of this remote clime,

and in this distant period, hear the blessed words as if they were sounded in our ears, and see with the spiritual eye the benignant form of the Son of God as he uttered them,—that form so full of grace and truth, so meek and lowly, yet so great and glorious.

Yes, beloved Saviour, often have I felt thy promise brought home to my heart, when, having entered into my closet and shut the door, I have prayed to my Father who is in secret, and felt that thou wast leading me to Him. But have I, when again in the world,—have I, as I ought, made Thee my guide to keep me from the evil that is in it? How often have I neglected the proffered aid, and instead of “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith,” have I followed the dictates of my own headstrong will! *Then*, my Saviour was not with me, for I had rejected him!

How near is my Saviour to me when I read the records of his life; dwelling on each event with humble love, listening to his words of heavenly wisdom, imagination transports me to the spot, and I almost seem to listen to him on the Mount, by the Lake, in the Garden,—he appears to be nearer to me even than he was to his disciples, for they knew far less than we can now do of the deep purposes of his soul, his inward struggles, and his secret anguish. How privileged then are we,—am I! But have I availed myself of this privilege as I ought? Have I listened to his voice of tender correction, “ye know not what spirit ye are of,” when ruffled by the little trials of daily intercourse? Have I striven to imitate his meek endeavour, yet firm and unbending constancy, when opposed in efforts of usefulness, or treated with forgetfulness or fickleness by those whom I have made many



sacrifices to serve? Have I sunk under pain, sorrow, or anxiety, and forgotten the anguish he voluntarily endured, that "through his stripes we might be healed?" O may I have a more abiding memory of that blessed promise of my Saviour to be with us even to the end of the world!

Yet chiefly do I feel this promise true,—most intimately do I enjoy near communion with my beloved Lord, when I unite with my fellow-disciples in celebrating that holy rite, by which, through the lapse of ages, all who love him have obeyed his parting injunction, "this do in remembrance of me." O glorious hour, when we shall break the spiritual bread and drink the "new wine" with him in his Father's kingdom! Gathered round his table with me at this feast of love, are the dear but absent ones, distant in body, present in spirit,—and nearer to me still the beloved departed, who have laid aside their mantle of clay, and whose spirits appear to be with me still in my pilgrimage,—and many spirits of the "just made perfect," whom we now seem to see and know better, *because* they are gone to the Father. This earthly love, mingling with that I bear to my Saviour, makes both more precious to me, and I look forward with more ardent hope to seeing him, with these loved ones, face to face, in those heavenly mansions in which, if his spiritual presence has been with us during our mortal career, we shall enjoy near intercourse with him for ever.

AND is he with thee? question well thy heart,  
If in his promise thou hast claimed thy part;—  
Ample thine heritage as *theirs* may be,  
Who held the legacy in trust for thee;  
To thee his word, that legacy, is given;  
The voice they heard on earth, now speaks from heaven;  
If in thy *life* he lives his history o'er,  
He blesses thee, as them he blest before.

Watch! on thy spirit shall arise the star,  
Bright as it shone on days and climes afar;  
Listen! while angel-voices, clear and sweet,  
“Glory to God, goodwill to men,” repeat;  
Up, then, obedient to the guiding ray,  
Thy soul's best offerings at his feet to lay.

Or, if on life's chafed ocean, waste and dark,  
Conflicting passions toss thy weary bark,—  
Then let the holy presence, brightly still,  
Serenely walk the wild waves of thy will;  
Secure thy course on this rough world shall be,  
As theirs who rode with him the midnight sea.

Sits he not with thee, as with them of yore,  
Breaking the bread he broke for them before?—  
Not now those twelve alone, who called him Lord,—  
Witnessing spirits gather at his board;  
Viewless they press, the awful feast to share;—  
The dead, the absent, all are present there.

But, say, hast thou denied him? It may be  
In deeds or thoughts, not words?—Then, turned on thee,  
See the deep pity of that mournful glance,  
The majesty throned on the brow's expanse;—  
And the reproof which those mute lips express,  
Shall steep thee in remorseful bitterness.

Or doth some guilty shame, some mighty woe,  
O'ershadow all above, and all below;  
Till thou hast lost the will, perhaps the power,  
To seek his presence in that fearful hour?—  
Dark as that hour when night on noontide spread,  
And the earth shuddered with convulsive dread,—

Hope on, hope on! there still is light above;  
Be meek in penitence, but strong in love;  
Seek him, though long, perchance, in doubt and fear  
You wander, murmuring "He is not here!"—  
"He is not here," a soothing voice replies;  
To yon calm heavens see him calmly rise!

Follow with straining eyes his radiant way,  
Thy sins, thy sorrows, shall he bear away;  
Yet, is he with thee! rise, prepare thy breast  
As fits a mansion for such honoured guest;  
When purged from earthly care and earthly ill,—  
When *that* is heaven—*there* he is with thee still!

## PRAYER.

OUR Father! blessed art Thou for the promise that Thou wilt come, with Thy Son, and take up Thine abode in our hearts. For what purpose hast Thou given us life, and a knowledge of our dependence on Thee, but that we may live in Thy fear, and seek Thy blessing always? Give me Thy grace, that I may feel in my inmost heart that Thou art indeed my Father; and may this knowledge of my dependence upon Thee be to me ever a fortress of protection into which I may escape in the hour of trial and despondency, and find peace and safety. O! give me

faith to believe, and pardon my unbelief. Open my eyes, even as Thou didst the eyes of the doubting prophet of old, that I too may see Thy power and Thy goodness overshadowing and protecting us. Thy armies encamp about the habitations of the just. Thou sufferest no evil to come nigh their dwelling. Thy word is pledged to make all things work together for good unto them that love and fear Thee. Thy gifts are all divine. Treasures of love lie hidden in all our hearts. Thy wisdom and Thy goodness are manifest in the sacred relations of life. O! make these joint relationships means of grace and strength to each of us whom Thou hast thus united. May we all grow more and more in Thy likeness, that our home may be as a fruitful garden in which all virtues and all graces shall abound; that meekness and gentleness, temperance and self-denial, kindness and love, may bring forth all their fruits amongst us, and ripen us all for heaven. Transform us daily more and more into the image of Christ, and may he be with us to guide us to the better land. And through him we ascribe unto Thee unceasing praises. Amen.





## IN CASE OF SEVERE ILLNESS.

—o—

Matt. xxvi., 29.—O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt.

ELP me, O! my Father, to say from the heart "Thy will be done." Whether this sickness be unto death or not, still, O! God, let it be for Thy glory and for my eternal good. May this disease of my body make my soul to be in health and prosper. Though my outward man decay and perish, may my inward man be renewed day by day, and never die, but live for ever. Hast Thou not reduced my strength to weakness, that I might lean upon Thee and be strong in the Lord? Hast Thou not taken away the desire of mine eyes, that I might desire none but God? Hast Thou not taken away my appetites, that I might the more hunger and thirst after righteousness?

Yea, Lord, blind and ignorant as I am, I can see some of the wisdom and goodness of Thy present dealings with me. It is the hand of my Father that guides me in this valley of tears. It is good for me that I am Thus afflicted. How often and how easily do my thoughts now rise to Thee! Thy character, Thy providence, Thy word, Thy

truth and grace coming by Jesus Christ—what interesting and delightful themes of meditation are they now to me !

Every increase of patience and fortitude, of light and of hope ; every mitigation of pain ; every sign of returning health ; all that nourishes, refreshes and sustains me ; all remind me of Thy careful presence and awaken my gratitude.

O ! let not the impressions made by sickness be obliterated by returning health. Let not the thoughts and resolutions of adversity be forgotten, if the days of prosperity should again be mine. This affliction has already given me a disrelish for the vain pleasures of this world. Shouldst Thou restore me, let them not attract and charm me again. I now delight to read Thy word, and to commune with Thee by prayer and meditation ; and shouldst Thou once more give me my former strength and vigour, give me a heart still to rejoice in Thy service. A sense of Thy presence now sustains and cheers my spirit ; let not Thy healing mercies tempt me to forget Thee.

If many wearisome days and nights are appointed unto me, teach me to suffer Thy will without complaining. O ! that I might be patient, submissive, resigned ; casting my care upon Thee ; to Thee committing my cause ; ascribing righteousness to Thee, my Maker, even in my greatest trials ; trusting in Thy defence ; hoping in Thy mercy. And O ! may I spend all the time of my sickness which I can command in reviewing my life ; in examining myself by the light and precepts of Thy holy word ; in exercising hearty sorrow and true repentance for my sins ; in cherishing faith in the Saviour, and pious gratitude for Thy goodness and grace.

And if this sickness is to be my last, O ! may Thy Spirit so renew, influence, and sanctify me ; may my repentance

be so sincere and thorough ; my faith so living and strong ;  
my love to mankind, to my blessed Saviour, and to Thee,  
so pure and affectionate, that Thy mercy in Christ may  
save my soul, and that death may be gain to me.

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WHEN sorrow sinks my spirit down,
And grief o'erwhelms my troubled mind,
Faith cries, "Look up to God alone,
A refuge thou in Him shalt find."
My soul obeys the sacred word,
And casts her care upon the Lord.

What though affliction's shades surround
My path, yet God is wise and just ;
And oft my fainting soul hath found
The promise true in which I trust :
Shall I then doubt His sacred word ?
No ! let me humbly trust the Lord.

'Tis in the hour of deep distress,
That we religion's comfort prove ;
The chastening hand we feel and bless
Of God, that scourges us in love.
Though nature sinks beneath the rod,
Yet faith reposes still in God.

It is the Lord that strikes the blow ;
Let every murmuring thought be still :
Oft has He made my cup o'erflow,
And shall I dare dispute His will ?
For ever be the thought abhorred !
My soul, still wait thou on the Lord !

Wait till He bid thy sorrows cease,
Till He thy every care remove;
And though thy troubles fast increase,
Thou need'st not doubt thy Father's love:
Though He delay, yet trust His word;
For true and faithful is the Lord.

Yes, Israel's God was never known
To leave His children in distress;
Mercy and truth surround His throne,
His judgments all are righteousness:
Still shall my soul this truth accord;
I will for ever trust the Lord.

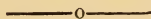
PRAYER.

O God, by Thy inscrutable providence Thou hast turned my health into sickness; my days of joy and comfort, into days of pain and languishing. Thou hast reduced my strength to weakness, and my flesh is wasting away by disease. Thou didst create,—Thine is the power to restore and heal me. If it please Thee, direct me to the use of such means as shall be effectual to my recovery. Yet, not my will, but Thine, be done. O Father, assist me to bear patiently and profitably all the chastisements of Thy hand. Save me from murmuring and repining, from despondency and gloom. Comfort my troubled heart by a living faith in Thee and in Thy Son. Refresh my fainting spirit with heavenly hopes and prospects. Sanctify my trials and afflictions to me. So long as I am continued in this feeble and dying frame, dispose me to lean on Thee for support.

Though my outward man perish, may my inward man be renewed day by day; though sickness press upon my body, may my soul be in health and prosper. Prepare me for all the sufferings I am yet to endure. Help me to exercise that repentance which is unto life; that faith which shall give me the victory over death; and oh! inspire me with a hope that shall never make me ashamed! While I live, be Thou my strength and confidence; and when I die, receive my departing spirit; through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.



IN CASE OF DEATH.



1 Thess. iv., 13.—I would not have you be ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others who have no hope.

F our brother sleep in Jesus, he shall do well. He resteth from the cares and the toils, the temptations and the snares, the disappointments and the anxieties, the afflictions and bereavements, which in this scene of trial and imperfection, attend even those who are in circumstances of outward prosperity. Henceforth, no pain or distress awaiteth him; no racking disease shall wear him; no failing powers shall dispirit him. No more shall he weep for the distresses of others which he cannot remove; no more shall he grieve because his powers will not accomplish that which was in his heart for the welfare of his brethren. But we trust that he is gone to a better country; where there shall be light without a cloud, and where sorrow and sighing shall for ever flee away. He is gone to his home; the days of his pilgrimage and of his mourning have been ended: the

gates of death have been opened to him; and while mortals cry, "A man is dead," angels shout, "A child is born."

And would we, for our own sakes, have detained our brother in the land of thorns and clouds? When God was willing to take the spirit unto himself, could we have wished that it should tarry longer with us, in pain and weakness? Let not such be the selfishness of our hearts. Let us "rejoice for our brother deceased; our loss is his infinite gain." It was far better that he should depart and be with Christ: and, although to stay here may have seemed more needful for us, it was only in appearance. It may be best for us also that he was taken. The light of his earthly course may now aid in shewing us the path to glory. The lessons of his death may work life in us. This new earnest of the heavenly inheritance, may quicken us in our search after it. This new tie to earth that is broken may become a new tie to bind us to the heavenly kingdom.

There is a time for solemn mourning; and this is such a time. Even if the principles of the gospel are in some good measure the guide of our conduct and affections, yet the feelings of nature are the same, and it is right that we should give them place in our hearts. Let us not endeavour to smother them, or to check their expression. Let not the chilling customs of the world, or false views of delicacy, prevent us from dwelling much and seriously on the life and death of the departed, both in the communion of our own hearts, and in the family circle. Let us allow him to live still amongst us in the spirit, though the bodily presence is denied us.

If the sorrow of our hearts, and the communing of our souls, lead us, with increased earnestness, to seek after the peace of Christ, it will indeed be well for us. Beauty will spring out of ashes, and life out of the dust. In the midst of our affliction we shall rejoice and leap for joy. And we shall find that we are not left comfortless, for the Holy Spirit of love, and patience, and trust, and faith, will come and take up its abode in our hearts.

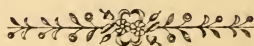
THOU art gone to the grave—but we will not deplore thee;
Though sorrow and darkness encompass the tomb,
The Saviour hath passed through its portals before thee,
And the lamp of his love is thy guide through the gloom.

Thou art gone to the grave—we no longer behold thee,
Nor tread the rough path of the world by thy side;
But the wide arms of mercy are spread to enfold thee;
And sinners may hope, since the sinless hath died.

Thou art gone to the grave—but 'twere wrong to deplore thee,
When God was thy Father, thy Guardian, thy Guide;
He gave thee, and took thee, and soon will restore thee,
Where death hath no sting, since the Saviour hath died.

P R A Y E R.

HOLY Father ! without Thy direction, nothing happeneth to us in life and death. Out of the depths of affliction and sorrow, unto Thee do I lift up my soul ; for my help and my hope are in Thee alone. I bless Thee for the life Thou hast thus far given us : and now that Thou hast taken our loved one to Thyself, I pray that our hearts may go to Thee also. Give us all grace so to follow the holy examples of those who have departed this life in Thy faith and fear, that at length we may, with them, be partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom. May we strive to redeem the time that has been lost ; and so number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto true wisdom. May we spend the remainder of our days on earth in the faithful discharge of our duty ; and live in such a manner as we shall wish to have done, when we come to die. May we glorify Thee on earth, and finish the work which Thou has given us to do. And when we shall leave this world, may we rest in peace ; and, being found acceptable in Thy sight, may we be received into Thy heavenly kingdom, with all dear unto us ; through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.



FOR THE LAST DAY IN THE YEAR.

—o—

James iv., 14.—What is your life?

THE winds of the dying year are now sighing around us with their departing breath; they warn us, in accents of fearful solemnity, to look back, before the light of another year shall open upon us, and see what improvement has been made of this.

Let us come to the inquiry honestly; but how few can do so without painful solicitude, for how little reason have we to think that *improvement* has been our one great object! Time rolls on, and the world changes as it goes. But how many, as regards *character*, appear to be standing precisely where they stood a year ago, or even many years ago! Just as good as they were and no better; no more devout, charitable, patient, or forgiving; no less worldly, selfish, irritable, and slothful. Change has passed over them; trial has summoned them to thought; Providence has warned them by a various discipline of gladness and grief; but there they stand, unaffected and unimproved. They have basked in the light; they have been refreshed with the dews of benignant and perpetual grace; but there is visible no spiritual growth, they have ripened no fruits of holiness.

Are we among those who have felt the worth of our souls, and have designed to walk in that path of duty which shall lead to life? We have made a certain progress in the great work of preparation,—the acquiring a Christian character. What have we done respecting it the past year? What additional advances have we made? Are we better acquainted with religion? Is our life more under the control of its laws? Are our dispositions more subjected to its spirit? Do we feel and exhibit a more disinterested regard to the welfare of others; and have we become more habitually alive to the presence and authority of God?

These questions every religious man ought to be able to answer in the affirmative. If he cannot, what has he been doing? If no better man, no better Christian, than five years or one year ago, to what purpose, and in what way, has that time been spent?

Happy, thrice happy, is he who can look calmly on this solemn hour and, while Time pauses on his way, can survey his character and history without a blush or a sigh! Happy that religious man who knows that he is more holy since the year began, and can hear, without trembling, the wings of the messenger as they sweep by him, bearing up to God the unchanging register of the finished season! He may hope to meet serenely the last hour of life. He may have peace when his eyes shall close on the last sun of his earthly existence. But if, careless and unprofitable Christian! your conscience reproach you for the misspent time and wasted opportunities of this one year; if you look, with shame and agitation, at the empty record which it now gives in to judgment, O! how will you bear the arrival of that day when all the books shall be opened, and time shall be no more? Awake! Arouse yourself!

Let it be enough that one barren year has past! Rouse yourself to diligence and duty! It may be that the fruitless tree will be spared one year longer. Awake! Be sober and watch unto prayer. Redeem the time that has been lost. Forget the things that are behind, and reach forth unto those that are before.

THE year hath passed away
Swift as the gliding stream,
And all its scenes appear
Like relics of a dream!
Spent are its griefs, its joys are flown,
And memory holds their trace alone.

Frail fleeting life! how soon
May thy probation close,
And they who prize thee most
In the still grave repose!
Thy joys are brief,—they cannot last,
And change comes o'er thy seasons fast.

Then pause, my soul, and trace
Time's progress and thine own;
Shall earth thy cares engage
When better things are known?
O! fix thy love on heavenly bliss;
All other good shall fail but this.

Yes! let thy zeal be strong
Life's purpose to fulfil,
And work, with all thy power,
Thy righteous Father's will;
So shall thy deeds be truly blest,
And death conduct to endless rest.

PRAYER.

HITHERTO Thou, O Father, hast blest me and mine. Through how many trials, through what varied difficulties, hast Thou sustained us! What cause have we for gratitude, for mercies continued and renewed to us, and for the many unexpected blessings of the year past! Father, Thou hast overwhelmed us with Thy favours. Thou hast given us as much joy as we would open our hearts to feel. Thou hast blest us with the means of holiness and the hope of glory. With humbling, contrite sorrow, we would call to mind the sins and errors of our hearts. Of thine infinite mercy pardon the neglects and transgressions of the past year, and of our past lives; and give us grace to watch and strive against them for the time to come. We desire to begin the year with Thee. O! may it be spent faithfully in Thy fear. We would afresh commit ourselves to Thy care, and devote ourselves to Thy service. And may we be wiser and better, more useful to others, more faithful to Thee, more influenced by Thy Spirit, more devoted to Thy service, and more meet for that world where days and years shall be unknown, and time shall be no more. I ask all through Jesus Christ, our ever blessed Mediator and Redeemer. Amen.



THE LIVING TEMPLE.

1 Cor. iii., 16.—And the Temple of God is holy,
which Temple ye are.



GLORIOUS temple is it, this temple of the living God, the earthly abode where He who filleth heaven and earth deigns to make manifest His spirit,—where in the Holy of Holies, He dwells!

This temple stands on a hill;—it cannot be hid;—gloriously does its golden roof, which no unclean thing must light upon, reflect the brightness of the rising sun;—pure, white and glistening are its stones when struck by heaven's rays. Earth's costliest treasures all are gathered in rich profusion to frame this temple; nowhere can be seen the precious metals in such lavish abundance;—no marble blocks of such gigantic size have been carried elsewhere, with such patient laborious toil. Lebanon's snows have not protected her cedars;—their sky-pointing tops have been levelled, their huge trunks have been laid low, and the waves have borne them towards the holy mount, that their fragrant wood may be consecrated in the temple of God.

Even the very earth on which it stands is holy: for there was offered of old the most devoted sacrifice that man could give;—there the father returned to the Giver the

child of many prayers, the son of his old age, the heir of promise ;—there did Isaac lie in meek submission, in all his living strength, on his funeral pile ;—there did the angel declare, that “in the mountain Jehovah had provided,”—that the sacrifice was accepted,—that his son was restored.

Let us enter the temple. No unholy thing must be there. No money-changers must there make their offerings to Mammon, and turn the house of God into a den of thieves. There must be no plaintive bleating of tethered lambs, no angry bellowing of tortured oxen bound for sacrifice ;—no sordid bargainings of avaricious dealers here. Take these things hence ;—nought that wears not the impress of the divine spirit shall be here ; but the lowliest, the humblest, the scorned, the degraded, the publican, the sinner, even the uncircumcised gentile, the doubting Greek, may wander midst the solemn porticos, to shut out the world, and yield themselves to the holy influence of the spirit of God which dwelleth in the temple. They may remain apart, lonely in a multitude, smiting on their breast ; or they may stand in reverence beholding the smoke rise from the altar of incense ; or they may come and listen to the Saviour, and ask from him living waters, or perchance hear the voice speaking to him from heaven, the angel-message, which to those far from him is only distant thunder.

But now hence to the inner sanctuary, to the court of the holy priesthood, which none may enter but those who have consecrated their hearts to the Lord. Let us then first pour our best gifts into the Treasury. No earthly offerings must be here ; no worthless gold and silver, while the treasures of the heart are withheld ; no tithes of mint, and anise, and cummin, to make up for the scanty measure

of the weightier matters of the law ; no jewels bright and shining without, heartless and stony within. Not these ! We must offer to Him who hath given *all we have even our whole living* ;—the holocaust of the poorest heart is costly in His sight. Gladly will we bring to consecrate to Him, and throw into His treasury, every gift which he has given us, all the talents, few or many, which He has entrusted to us ;—every thought, every desire, every affection, every power, shall be His, and He shall bid us use them for whatever pleaseth Him.

Now the consecrated may go within ; they may enter the Court of the Priests of Jehovah. There they may sing with joy His praises, and talk of His wondrous works to the children of men. There they may serve Him day and night, rejoicing to do His will. Thence shall arise the fragrant odours from the altar of incense, diffusing their holy perfumes far around ; and there the accepted sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit shall be offered in lowly adoration, and beheld with reverence by the multitudes without. Truly, O Lord ! as the Hallels ascend to heaven, do we exclaim in rapture, “ A day in thy courts is better than a thousand.” Blessed are the hours which the soul spends in those courts of its living temple, to provide itself with heavenly weapons for the warfare of the world without,—the shield of faith, the sword of the spirit, the whole armour of God, consecrated to His service.

But there is beyond a Holy Place where none but the priests of God themselves may enter. Blessed are they who depart not from the temple day or night ; who here can come in holy communion before the Lord, with nought to distract their spirits, and where every object tells of Jehovah’s marvellous dealings with the children of men.

My soul ! thou canst not be always here ; but into this part of His living temple mayst thou often come, to gather strength for the struggles of life ; for here thou wilt hold communion with those only whose souls have been consecrated to the Lord,—those who once journeyed with thee, but now are gone, but whose spirits abide with Thee ever ; those whom thou hast not known on earth, but who have left the inspiration of their spirit in their living words, which ages shall treasure till time shall be no more ;—those still travelling with Thee onwards !

Yet there is a place still more sacred :—The Holy of Holies. There is a thick veil before it, and no one must go within but the High Priest alone ; it is the soul only that can enter that holiest part of its tabernacle, where the glorious Shekinah of God's immediate presence is beheld with mortal eyes, and felt in actual existence. It is the Mercy-seat alone that is there, and the Saviour has brought us to it. No longer but once a year, on a great day of expiation, may it be approached. No longer is it the awful Jehovah, whom none may behold and live, that fills the Holy of Holies ; but the Father of the Spirit, in whose blessed presence the soul delights to dwell, daily, hourly, with filial reverence, but in all the nearness of love. There only does the soul *exist* ; there only is it no longer separated from life.

Glorious is this early temple of the living God, the Spirit and Life of the universe. But this tabernacle must be dissolved. Then, in the heavenly Jerusalem, shall the freed spirit find its fit dwelling-place. There, is no need of a temple ; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb there receive in full communion the spirits of the blessed, and are the eternal Light and Life of it.

P R A Y E R .

O God ! Thou spirit of our secret life, apart from whom our nature faints ! weary of ourselves, we come to Thy shelter. Our span of troubled days we bring within Thy calm eternity,—over our path of pilgrimage we feel the spaces of Thine immensity,—on the dimness of our pure desires we seek the glow of Thy paternal smile,—in the strife of sin and the sadness of mortality, we find a spirit of power and of hope in the memory of Thy holy providence.

Infinite Ruler of Creation, whose spirit dwells in every world ! we look not to the solemn heavens for Thee, though Thou art there,—we search not in the ocean for Thy presence, though it murmurs with Thy voice,—we wait not for the wings of the wind to bring Thee nigh, though they are Thy messengers,—for Thou art in our hearts, O ! God, and makest Thy abode in the deep places of our thought and love,—and into each gentle affection, each contrite sorrow, each noble aspiration,—we would retire to meet and worship Thee. Lord of our living conscience, who speakest to us in the secret voice of duty, and pleadest with us in the grief of sin, Thy creatures that know Thee not have more truly served Thee than our conscious minds ; and while seasons and waves obey Thy word, our vacillating desires forget to finish Thy work, our restless passions keep not the order of Thy will. O ! God, Thou knowest the soul within us, that it is not built up as an immortal sanctuary for Thy praise ; but is a wreck of broken purposes, and fallen aspirations, and desecrated affections. Fountain of purity and peace ! shed on us the influence of

a new hope and holier sympathies ; refresh our dry souls with the dews of a true penitence. O ! that our strength might fail, and our wills be deluded no more, when we strive against the weight of indolence, the seductions of self-love, and the weakness of a desponding mind.

O ! Father, who dost bless us always even in our griefs, and love us even in our sins, from the spirit of Jesus the crucified, whose cry went up unto Thee, from his meek triumph, his passage to immortal rest, we would learn to trust Thee, and look up amid the sadness of Thy Providence. O ! may our human sympathies be more and more followers of Thee as dear children, and spread, like Thy tranquil presence, wherever suffering is laid low, or the sigh of the oppressed is heard, or remorse retires to weep. May we sanctify ourselves, and imitate Thee by blessing others. Before the breath of a divine love within us may the cloud of anxiety and the storm of fretful passions be swept away. Beneath the light of Thy peace may even the valley of the shadow of death be to our feet as the green pastures and the still waters. And when we pass into that land which no eye hath seen, may we be of ready heart to meet our forerunners there, and bless Thee that the days of sorrow and temptation are finished. Amen.



POETICAL
MEDITATIONS.



MYSTERIOUS Night! when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
And lo! creation widened in man's view.
Who could have thought such darkness lay conceal'd
Within thy beams, O Sun? or who could find,
Whilst fly, and leaf, and insect stood reveal'd,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind?
Why do we then shun Death with anxious strife?
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life?



POETICAL MEDITATIONS.

TO THE URSA MAJOR.



WITH what a stately and majestic step
That glorious constellation of the north
Treads its eternal circle ! going forth
Its princely way amongst the stars, in slow
And silent brightness. Mighty one, all hail !
I joy to see thee on thy glowing path
Walk, like some stout and girded giant—stern,
Unwearied, resolute, whose toiling foot
Disdains to loiter on its destined way.
The other tribes forsake their midnight tract,
And rest their weary orbs beneath the wave ;
But thou dost never close thy burning eye,
Nor stay thy steadfast step. But on, still on,
While systems change, and suns retire, and worlds
Slumber and wake, thy ceaseless march proceeds.
The near horizon tempts to rest in vain.
Thou, faithful sentinel, dost never quit
Thy long appointed watch ; but, sleepless still,
Dost guard the fixed light of the universe,
And bid the north for ever know its place.
Agnes have witnessed thy devoted trust,
Unchanged, unchanging. When the sons of God

Sent forth that shout of joy which rang through heaven,
And echoed from the outer spheres that bound
The illimitable universe, thy voice
Joined the high chorus; from the radiant orbs
The glad cry sounded, swelling to His praise,
Who thus had cast another sparkling gem,
Little, but beautiful, amid the crowd
Of splendours that enrich His firmament.
As thou art now, so wast thou then the same.
Ages have rolled their course, and time grown gray;
The earth has gathered to her womb again,
And yet again, the myriads that were born
Of her uncounted, unremembered tribes.
The seas have changed their beds—the eternal hills
Have stooped with age—the solid continents
Have left their banks—and man's imperial works—
The toil, pride, strength of kingdoms, which had flung
Their haughty honours in the face of heaven,
As if immortal—have been swept away—
Shattered and mouldering, buried and forgot.
But time has shed no dimness on thy front,
Nor touched the firmness of thy tread; youth, strength,
And beauty still are thine—as clear, as bright,
As when the Almighty Former sent thee forth,
Beautiful offspring of His curious skill,
To watch earth's northern beacon, and proclaim
The eternal chorus of eternal Love.

I wonder as I gaze. That stream of light,
Undimmed, unquenched,—just as I see it now,
Has issued from those dazzling points, through years
That go back far into eternity.
Exhaustless flood! for ever spent, renewed
For ever! Yea, and those refulgent drops,
Which now descend upon my lifted eye,
Left their far fountain twice three years ago.
While those winged particles, whose speed outstrips

The flight of thought, were on their way, the earth
Compass'd its tedious circuit round and round,
And, in the extremes of annual change, beheld
Six autumns fade, six springs renew their bloom.
So far from earth those mighty orbs revolve !
So vast the void through which their beams descend !
Yea, glorious lamps of God ! He may have quenched
Your ancient flames, and bid eternal night
Rest on your spheres ; and yet no tidings reach
This distant planet. Messengers still come
Laden with your far fire, and we may seem
To see your lights still burning ; while their blaze
But hides the black wreck of extinguished realms,
Where anarchy and darkness long have reigned.

Yet what is this, which to the astonished mind
Seems measureless, and which the baffled thought
Confounds ? A span, a point, in those domains,
Which the keen eye can traverse. Seven stars
Dwell in that brilliant cluster, and the sight
Embraces all at once ; yet each from each
Recedes as far as each of them from earth.
And every star from every other burns
No less remote. From the profound of heaven,
Untravelled even in thought, keen, piercing rays
Dart through the void, revealing to the sense
Systems and worlds unnumbered. Take the glass,
And search the skies. The opening skies pour down
Upon your gaze thick showers of sparkling fire—
Stars, crowded, thronged, in regions so remote,
That their swift beams—the swiftest things that be—
Have travelled centuries on their flight to earth.
Earth, sun, and nearer constellations ! What
Are ye amid this infinite extent
And multitude of God's most infinite works !

And these are suns !—vast, central, living fires,
Lords of dependent systems, kings of worlds

That wait as satellites upon their power,
And flourish in their smile. Awake! my soul,
And meditate the wonder! Countless suns
Blaze round thee, leading forth their countless worlds!
Worlds in whose bosoms living things rejoice,
And drink the bliss of being from the fount
Of all-pervading Love. What mind can know,
What tongue can utter, all their multitudes!
Thus numberless in numberless abodes!
Known but to Thee, blessed Father! Thine they are,
Thy children; and Thy care—and none o'erlooked
Of Thee! No not the humblest soul that dwells
Upon the humblest globe, which wheels its course
Amid the giant glories of the sky,
Like the mean mote that dances in the beam
Amongst the mirrored lamps, which fling
Their wasteful splendour from the palace wall,—
None, none escape the kindness of Thy care;
All compassed underneath Thy spacious wing,
Each fed and guided by Thy powerful hand.

Tell me, ye splendid orbs! as from your throne
Ye mark the rolling provinces that own
Your sway—what beings fill those bright abodes?
How formed, how gifted? what their powers, their state,
Their happiness, their wisdom? Do they bear
The stamp of human nature? Or has God
Peopled those purer realms with lovelier forms
And more celestial minds? Does Innocence
Still wear her native and untainted bloom?
Or has Sin breathed his deadly blight abroad,
And sowed corruption in those fairy bowers?
Has War trod o'er them with his foot of fire?
And Slavery forged his chains; and Wrath, and Hate,
And sordid Selfishness, and cruel Lust,
Leagued their base bands to tread out light and truth,
And scatter woe where Heaven had planted joy?

Or are they yet all paradise, unfallen
And uncorrupt? existence one long joy,
Without disease upon the frame, or sin
Upon the heart, or weariness of life—
Hope never quenched, and age unknown,
And death unfear'd; while fresh and fadeless youth
Glows in the light from God's near throne of love?

Open your lips, ye wonderful and fair!
Speak, speak! the mysteries of those living worlds
Unfold!—No language? Everlasting light,
And everlasting silence?—Yet the eye
May read and understand. The hand of God
Has written legibly what man may know,
THE GLORY OF THE MAKER. There it shines,
Ineffable, unchangeable; and man,
Bound to the surface of this pigmy globe,
May know and ask no more. In other days,
When death shall give the encumbered spirit wings,
Its range shall be extended; it shall roam.
Perchance, amongst those vast mysterious spheres,
Shall pass from orb to orb, and dwell in each
Familiar with its children—learn their laws
And share their state, and study and adore
The infinite variety of bliss
And beauty, by the Hand of power divine
Lavished on all its works. Eternity
Shall thus roll on with ever fresh delight;
No pause of pleasure or improvement; world
On world still opening to the instructed mind
An unexhausted universe, and time
But adding to its glories. While the soul,
Advancing ever to the Source of light
And all perfection, lives, adores, and reigns
In cloudless knowledge, purity, and bliss!

A SUMMER EVENING'S MEDITATION.

"One sun by day, by night ten thousand shine."

YOUNG.

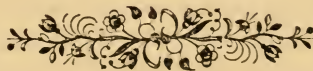
 IS past! The sultry tyrant of the south
Has spent his short-lived rage; more grateful hours
Move silent on; the skies no more repel
The dazzled sight, but with mild maiden beams
Of tempered lustre, court the cherished eye
To wander o'er their sphere; where hung aloft
Dian's bright crescent, like a silver bow
New strung in heaven, lifts high its beamy horns
Impatient for the night, and seems to push
Her brother down the sky. Fair Venus shines
Even in the eye of day; with sweetest beam
Propitious shines, and shakes a trembling flood
Of softened radiance from her dewy locks.
The shadows spread apace; while meekened Eve,
Her cheek yet warm with blushes, slow retires
Thro' the Hesperian gardens of the west,
And shuts the gates of day. 'Tis now the hour
When Contemplation, from her sunless haunts,
The cool damp grotto, or the lonely depth
Of unpierced woods, where wrapt in solid shade
She mused away the gaudy hours of noon,
And fed on thoughts unripened by the sun,
Moves forward; and with radiant finger points
To yon blue concave swelled by breath divine,

Where, one by one, the living eyes of heaven
Awake, quick kindling o'er the face of ether
One boundless blaze; ten thousand trembling fires,
And dancing lustres, where the unsteady eye,
Restless and dazzled, wanders unconfin'd
O'er all this field of glories; spacious field,
And worthy of the Master: He, whose hand
With hieroglyphics elder than the Nile
Inscribed the mystic tablet; hung on high
To public gaze, and said, Adore, O man!
The finger of thy God. From what pure wells
Of milky light, what soft o'erflowing urn,
Are all these lamps so fill'd? these friendly lamps,
For ever streaming o'er the azure deep
To point our path, and light us to our home.
How soft they slide along their lucid spheres!
And silent as the foot of time, fulfil
Their destined courses. Nature's self is hushed,
And, but a scattered leaf, which rustles thro'
The thick-wove foliage, not a sound is heard
To break the midnight air; tho' the raised ear,
Intensely listening, drinks in every breath.
How deep the silence, yet how loud the praise!
But are they silent all? or is there not
A tongue in every star, that talks with man,
And woos him to be wise? nor woos in vain:
This dead of midnight is the noon of thought,
And Wisdom mounts her zenith with the stars.
At this still hour the self-collected soul
Turns inward, and beholds a stranger there
Of high descent, and more than mortal rank;
An embryo God; a spark of fire divine,
Which must burn on for ages, when the sun,—
Fair transitory creature of a day!—
Has closed his golden eye, and wrapt in shades
Forgets his wonted journey thro' the east.

Ye citadels of light, and seats of Gods !
Perhaps my future home, from whence the soul,
Revolving periods past, may oft look back,
With recollected tenderness, on all
The various busy scenes she left below,
Its deep laid projects and its strange events,
As on some fond and doting tale that sooth'd
Her infant hours— O ! be it lawful now
To tread the hallow'd circle of your courts,
And with mute wonder and delighted awe
Approach your burning confines. Seiz'd in thought,
On fancy's wild and roving wing I sail,
From the green borders of the peopled earth,
And the pale moon, her duteous fair attendant :
From solitary Mars ; from the vast orb
Of Jupiter, whose huge gigantic bulk
Dances in ether like the lightest leaf ;
To the dim verge, the suburbs of the system,
Where cheerless Saturn 'midst his wat'ry moons
Girt with a lucid zone, in gloomy pomp,
Sits like an exiled monarch : fearless thence
I launch into the trackless deeps of space,
Where, burning round, ten thousand suns appear,
Of elder beam, which ask no leave to shine
Of our terrestrial star, nor borrow light
From the proud regent of our scanty day ;
Sons of the morning, first-born of creation,
And only less than Him who marks their track,
And guides their fiery wheels. Here must I stop,
Or is there aught beyond ? What hand unseen
Impels me onward thro' the glowing orbs
Of habitable nature, far remote,
To the dread confines of eternal night,
To solitudes of vast unpeopled space,
The deserts of creation, wide and wild ;
Where embryo systems and unkindled suns

Sleep in the womb of chaos? fancy droops,
And thought astonish'd stops her bold career.
But O Thou mighty mind! whose powerful word
Said, Thus let all things be, and thus they were,
Where shall I seek Thy presence? how unblamed
Invoke Thy dread perfection?
Have the broad eye-lids of the morn beheld Thee?
Or does the beamy shoulder of Orion
Support Thy throne? O! look with pity down
On erring, guilty man; not in Thy names
Of terror clad; not with those thunders armed
That conscious Sinai felt, when fear appalled
The scatter'd tribes;—Thou hast a gentler voice,
That whispers comfort to the swelling heart,
Abash'd, yet longing to behold her Maker.

But now my soul, unused to stretch her powers
In flight so daring, drops her weary wing,
And seeks again the known accustomed spot,
Drest up with sun, and shade, and lawns, and streams,
A mansion fair and spacious for its guest,
And full replete with wonders. Let me here,
Content and grateful, wait the appointed time,
And ripen for the skies; the hour will come
When all these splendors bursting on my sight
Shall stand unveiled, and to my ravish'd sense
Unlock the glories of the world unknown.



ADDRESS TO THE DEITY.



OD of my life ! and Author of my days !
Permit my feeble voice to lisp Thy praise ;
And trembling, take upon a mortal tongue,
That hallow'd name to harps of seraphs sung.
Yet here the brightest seraphs can no more
Than veil their faces, tremble and adore.
Worms, angels, men, in every different sphere,
Are equal all,—for all are nothing here.
All nature faints beneath the mighty name,
Which nature's works through all their parts proclaim.
I feel that name my inmost thoughts control,
And breathe an awful stillness thro' my soul ;
As by a charm, the waves of grief subside ;
Impetuous Passion stops her headlong tide :
At Thy felt presence all emotions cease,
And my hush'd spirit finds a sudden peace,
'Till every worldly thought within me dies,
And earth's gay pageants vanish from my eyes ;
'Till all my sense is lost in infinite,
And one vast object fills my aching sight.
But soon, alas ! this holy calm is broke ;
My soul submits to wear her wonted yoke ;
With shackled pinions strives to soar in vain,
And mingles with the dross of earth again.
But He, our gracious Master, kind as just,
Knowing our frame, remembers man is dust ;
His spirit, ever brooding o'er our mind,
Sees the first wish to better hopes inclin'd ;

Marks the young dawn of every virtuous aim,
And fans the smoking flax into a flame.
His ears are open to the softest cry,
His grace descends to meet the lifted eye ;
He reads the language of a silent tear,
And sighs are incense from a heart sincere.
Such are the vows, the sacrifice I give ;
Accept the vow, and bid the suppliant live ;
From each terrestrial bondage set me free ;
Still every wish that centres not in Thee ;
Bid my fond hopes, my vain disquiets cease,
And point my path to everlasting peace.

If the soft hand of winning Pleasure leads
By living waters, and through flowery meads,
When all is smiling, tranquil, and serene,
And vernal beauty paints the flattering scene,
O ! teach me to elude each latent snare,
And whisper to my sliding heart—Beware !
With caution let me hear the syren's voice.
And doubtful, with a trembling heart, rejoice.
If friendless in a vale of tears I stray,
Where briars wound, and thorns perplex my way,
Still let my steady soul Thy goodness see,
And with strong confidence lay hold on Thee ;
With equal eye my various lot receive,
Resigned to die, or resolute to live ;
Prepar'd to kiss the sceptre or the rod,
While God is seen in all, and all in God.

I read His awful name, emblazoned high
With golden letters on the illumined sky ;
Nor less the mystic characters I see
Wrought in each flower, inscribed on every tree ;
In every leaf that trembles to the breeze,
I hear the voice of God among the trees ;
With Thee in shady solitudes I walk,
With Thee in busy crowded cities talk,

In every creature own Thy forming power,
In each event Thy providence adore.
Thy hopes shall animate my drooping soul,
Thy precepts guide me, and Thy fears control.
Thus shall I rest, unmoved by all alarms,
Secure within the temple of Thine arms,
From anxious cares, from gloomy terrors free,
And feel myself omnipotent in Thee.

Then, when the last, the closing hour draws nigh,
And earth recedes before my swimming eye;
When trembling on the doubtful edge of fate
I stand, and stretch my view to either state :
Teach me to quit this transitory scene
With decent triumph, and a look serene;
Teach me to fix my ardent hopes on high,
And having lived to Thee, in Thee to die.



O D E.

"Mourn not, therefore, child of immortality ; for the spoiler, the cruel spoiler, that laid waste the works of God is subdued : Jesus hath conquered Death. Child of immortality ! mourn no longer."

FIRST VOICE.

“TRIKE, strike, my lyre, the solemn notes of woe,
For all that's fair is fleeting, here below.
Swifter than April gleams they pass away,
The joys, the hopes, that rise but to decay.
They seem our own,
We know no fear,
But they are gone
For ever here,—

Our life's long hopes, our purest joys, all withered in a day !”

SECOND VOICE.

“ Yet there is gladness round ;
Why list we only to the voice of sorrow ?
Hark ! that full joyous sound !
Sweet child, so gay, so thoughtless of the morrow,
O turn on me thy smile ;
The sunny promise of a day so bright,
Let it my soul beguile,
And shed on me its hope, its love, its light ;
Yes ! let it banish dismal care and sorrow's gloomy night.

“ And hark ! the voice of Spring !
It sounds full cheerily ;
The blithe young greenwoods sing
Merrily, merrily !

And see the buds all opening fair and bright,
Promise of loveliest flowers ;
And see the trees all decked in virgin white,
Gladdening the bridal bowers :
O 'tis a world of life and love ! a joyous world is ours !

“ And there is many a fair young form
Too bright to die ;
And strong and high
Beats many a heart with feelings warm ;
And there are heads round which the laurels twine
In earliest youth ;
There are blest spirits hallowed at the shrine
Of holy truth :
O these are lovelier far than Spring, these cannot fade and fly.”

FIRST VOICE.

“ Thus may'st thou sing whose springtide hour is bright,
On whom no wintry storms as yet have burst,—
Who hast not seen cold Autumn shed his blight
On beauties Spring and Summer hours had nurst.
Now Hope is round thee—
Soon she'll fly ;
Sorrow hath found me—
Let me sigh ;
Stay not my dirge of grief for joys that quickly fade and fly.

“ Once, too, for me the laughing day
Shed sweets around ;
Life was in all most bright and gay ;
Too soon I found
That Death is in the world ; his gloomy pall
Once seen is ever near,
And coldly sheds its ghastly shade on all,
Filling the soul with fear,
And telling us our dearest joys, our highest hopes, must fall.

" Why does that mother always mourn, nor raise her drooping eye ?

Why does a cloud o'ershadow all, and never pass her by ?

Her morning star is hid in gloom,

Her daughter sunk into the tomb !

Why does that matron grieving sit within her palace-gate,
Nor heed, while years roll tedious on, her noble mansion's state ?

Her thoughts are ever in the grave, her only hope and trust,
Soon with her husband and her son to mingle dust with dust.
O gloomy is this narrow vale ! sad—sad is mortal fate !

" Yes ! there hath been a gladness in my soul

Like that of infancy ;

Now nought but gloomy sorrows round me roll—

I've lost its buoyancy !

Once in my heart young hopes were gay and fair,

Like bright leaves springing,

Like sweet bells singing,

But never more shall happiness be there ;

Deep sorrow ever o'er me broods, and dark corroding care."

THIRD VOICE.

" Thou sorrowing child of dust, why grieves thy heart
That earthly charms depart ?

When the green earth its choicest treasures brings,

It tells of heavenly springs ;

The dying year touches with brightest hues

The drooping trees and flowers,

Which in our souls the blessed thoughts infuse

Of ever sunny hours,

Where the blest Tree of Life shall bloom and be for ever ours.

" E'en when Death circles in his icy arms

All that thou hast most dear,

And from our sight vanish all earthly charms,

A heavenly hope is near.

Faith gilds the mists of human feeling,
Love glows more brightly near the tomb ;
Peace in the sorrowing bosom stealing,
Sheds light amidst the thickest gloom,
All to the prayerful soul a glimpse of brighter worlds revealing.

“ Such was the faith that cheered the dying bed
As o'er her son the mother bent,
And soothed with tender love his drooping head,
On whom her fondest hopes were lent.
‘ These sufferings of a day
Soon, soon shall pass away,
And I shall see my dear Redeemer's face :
My mother ! follow me to that blest place,
And let us all together share our Heavenly Father's grace ! ”

“ And would that mother call to earth her son
To share the toils of life's perplexing way ?
No ! Though in grief her course she now must run,
And o'er his vacant place her tears will stray,
Religion's soft control
Illumes her inmost soul ;
In hopeful trust she says, ‘ Thy will is best,
My Father ! Be Thy Name for ever blest :
I would not take my son again from his eternal rest. ’

“ Death blights not, chills not, but awakes
The heart's immortal, pure desires ;
O'er the dark vale a glory breaks
From Heaven, to which the soul aspires.
I've seen the wife and mother dying,
All her fair earthly visions flying ;
Yet as her life was ebbing fast,
These accents were her last,—
‘ My Father ! 'tis a glorious morn—all, all is bright within ! ’

“Live in the power of an eternal life !

’Twas thus the Saviour, dwelling still on earth,
O’ercame its cares and sorrows, toil and strife ;

And thus his followers of the second birth,
To whom immortal hopes and joys are given,
Fear not to die ;

The holy ties of earth can ne’er be riven,
For soon on high

The ransom’d shall with Christ partake their purer bliss in heaven.

“Let Hope and Joy kindle their fairest rays

In all that’s lovely here,
Faint earnest of a brighter blaze
In the celestial sphere.

Let Pain and Sorrow shade the dazzled sight,
Unused to such excess of light :

Death draws the veils aside
Which endless glories hide,

And opens to the faithful soul its high, eternal home !”

1836.



ASPIRATION.



ONWARD and upward, Heavenly Father, bear me,
Onward and upward, raise me to my Home!
Onward and upward, be Thou ever near me,
Where my blessed parents beckon me to come.

With Thy holy spirit, O do Thou renew me,
Cleanse me from all that turneth me from Thee;
Guide me and guard me, lead me and subdue me,
Till I love not all that centres not in Thee.

Thou hast filled my soul with brightness and with beauty,
Thou hast made me feel the sweetness of Thy love,—
Purify my heart, devote me all to duty,
Sanctify me wholly for Thy realms above.

Holy, heavenly Parent of this earth-born spirit!
Onward and upward bear it to its Home,
With Thy first-born Son eternal joys t' inherit,
Where my blessed lost ones beckon me to come.

1848.



DEDICATION.



O Thee, my God, to Thee,
Teach me to live;
To Thee my God, to Thee,
All would I give.

Whate'er I hold most dear
I would resign ;—
Sure I have nothing here,—
All mine is Thine.

What most my soul doth prize
The least is mine ;—
Nought that is holy dies,
For it is Thine !

The life that came from Thee
Can never die ;—
Teach me to yield it Thee,
Without a sigh !

For still my heart doth cling
To what is fair :—
Heavenward my spirit wing,
And fix it there.

Bear all that most I love
To heavenly rest ;
Bear Thou my soul above,
And make it blest.

My all, O God, to Thee
I would resign ;
O fix my heart on Thee,
I would be Thine.

1849.

J O Y.

“In Thy presence is fulness of joy.”



OY! whence art thou? Not of human birth,
Though dwelling still on Earth ;
Thou flutterest here and there with restless wing,
Waiting towards Heaven to spring.

I've seen thee sporting with the laughing child,
So frolicksome and wild ;
He thought that thou wast his—but thou wast gone,
And he was left alone.

I saw bright youths in the gay springtide time,
Life's hopeful glowing prime ;
Thou madest for them all around so fair,
They knew not grief was there.

And much I feared when thou thy flight did'st take,
 Their very hearts would break ;
 But thou hadst given them words of promise sweet,
 " Full shortly we shall meet."

1839.

* * *

Thou hoverest soon near one with drooping head,
 Weeping his sister dead ;
 He saw thee not, but felt thy heavenly breath,
 And sweetness found in death.

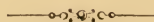
And then I saw that bright one faint and dying ;
 Life's springtide days fast flying ;
 But tender love was round his suffering bed,
 And soothed his aching head.

And near him lay Spring's freshest, fairest flowers,
 That told of happier hours ;
 Their beauty cheered his wearing pains awhile,
 And sweetly did he smile.

For thou wast near ;—no more with flitting wing
 Threatening away to spring ;
 But with thy Heaven-born sisters, Faith and Love,
 To waft his soul above.

Blessed and beautiful ! I know thee now,
 By thy calm radiant brow !
 Thou camest from God's own eternal throne,
 To mark us as His own !

1849.



S O R R O W



LOVE thee, Sorrow, twin Sister of Joy, with thy
downcast eye, from which gleam upwards bright
glances mid thy falling tears !

They that live without God in the world love
thee not,—know thee not;—they discern thee not
from that earth-born sorrow which stirs within
them thoughts of bitterness, which clouds their vision with
impenetrable mists of dark brooding, which chains them to
the seen and temporal, and then with a stern and cruel
hand tears it from them,—which worketh death. But
THOU ! How shall I speak with mortal tongue thy heavenly
beauty ?

Thou didst touch with gentle hand the glad child. He
had but glimpsed before the twilight haze in which thou
hidest thyself from the gay, busy world,—and he feared it,
for he knew not what awful form was behind it, and he
loved nothing but what was bright as his young heart, and
full of springing life like his fresh spirit. But thou didst
clasp him lovingly in thy arms, and whisper to him of a
fairer garden than that he delighted in, with sweeter
flowers;—of a more beautiful world,—of a happier home.
And when he wept at the first cold touch of Death, thou
didst show him blessed spirits that dwell with the Saviour,
and that can never change ; thou didst tell him of Heaven.
So he loved thee, for he felt that thou camest from the

Home of his spirit, to bring him a message from his Father, and he never forgot thy heavenly visit to him.

Thy beautiful Sister, Joy, oft precedes thee. At times she joins together two young spirits, and earth seems heaven to them. Joy has ever something in her radiant eye that tells she is not of this world; but yet she hid her wings from them, and they thought that she was theirs for ever. So she was, but not *here*. For soon she became invisible, and there was only one, instead of two, and thou wast by the mourner! Yet gentle were thy ministrations, Oh Sorrow, to the lone one. Thy Sister had hid her wings;—thine were outspread softly to shade the grieving one from the world's glare, and to be ready to bear her too aloft when her hour should come. She saw that thou wast from Heaven, and she loved thy gentle, pensive look that told her of her lost one, and where he was;—she was refreshed by the dew droppings from thy wings, which revived her fainting spirit; and with thy tender hand ever guiding her, Joy not being far distant, she went on her way.

But in thick darkness dost thou sometimes visit us frail mortals. Ever art thou thy Father's messenger of love, but then even thou hast shrunk from thy dreadful task, and thy hand was icy cold. Thy blow was very hard, though it was in mercy sent. O take with thee thy Sisters, Faith and Love, when thou art so awful a visitant. The poor sufferer will not perhaps see them at first; but when the midnight gloom is past, when the morning dawns, and the Star of Hope beams above the horizon, then shalt thou appear in thy true loveliness; then shall the mourner greet thee reverently as one of the Heavenly Father's Angel Messengers. And when the grieving heart is thus humbled,

then shall the afflicted one see joy also, who cometh in the morning after the night of sorrow ; she shall bring with her many blessed gifts, and the earth shall no longer seem a wilderness, but the passage to Canaan ;—no more the Valley of the Tomb, but the Portal of Heaven.

Then again there are fearful storms in the elements, whirlwinds of men's passions, that assail us pilgrims through this passage desert. Perchance we have not a cave to hide us, nor a rock to shelter us from their fury. For a season our eyes are blinded, and we are tossed to and fro we know not whither. We prostrate ourselves in the dust, that the hot stormy wind may pass over us, and that we may gather strength from weakness. We listen—it is thy still small voice, Oh Sorrow, that breathes into our souls God's holy spirit. We rise and take courage, for we see thy form, as one of the Heavenly Messengers, mingling even in the thickest affray of the powers of darkness. We go boldly on, thou leading us, and midst the wild howlings of the enemy, we hear the sweet accents of Joy, rejoicing that through strength divine we have overcome the world.

Yet even fiercer dangers attack the homeward-bound wanderer ; the fiery darts of Satan assail him, his soul is pierced, he is torn asunder with inward agony. He cries aloud, "Is there none to save ? Who shall deliver me from this body of death ? Oh wretched man that I am !" Thou comest to him, Oh Sorrow, and pourest balm into his wounded spirit ; thou bedwest his burning eye-balls with refreshing tears ; thou anointest him with the softening oil of God's grace ; thou givest him to drink the strengthening wine of Christ's love. Now he can look up, his face beaming with faith and joy and hope. Thou hast healed his sores. Oh Sorrow, thou wilt not leave him ; he will

have need of thee always while he is here below, for thou bringest him a peace the world knoweth not of, that it can neither give nor take away.

Oh Sorrow ! Blessed Messenger from Heaven ! I have known thee long and well ! While the light of new life was first freshly beaming on my young spirit, I was the darling of thy Sister Joy, who tenderly caressed me, and imprinted a kiss on my smooth forehead, yet so that no one should see it but thou ; it was never worn off even when that forehead was wrinkled with cares, and seemed old while still young ;—I scarce remember those early days. Then thou, who hadst seen the token on me, didst flutter near me in many different forms, and sometimes overshadow my sun with thick gloom. But I always knew thee to be a Heavenly Messenger, and never tried to shun thee, for I trusted that thou wouldst bring with thee thy Sisters, Faith and Hope ;—I had not learnt yet that Joy is thy twin Sister. When Death's angel bore away from me my beloved one, my Father, then thou camest to me with all thy Sisters to comfort me, and after the first gloom of nature's deep anguish, I saw thee, as thou wast, in all thy beauty. Thou didst not fold down thy wings, for thou knewest that I should never wish thee to leave me ; thy breath was my life, for with it I seemed to be with my lost one. Thus be with me ever, Oh long beloved, till Death's angel summons me also ; then, with thy Sisters round thee, bear me aloft on outspread wings, into the Heavenly Father's presence ; then, when he receives me as His own child, shall I behold thee bright and beautiful as thy twin Sister, Joy, among the Ministering Spirits of God's eternal throne, whom He sends to bring us to Himself !

1849.



"He shall give His Angels charge concerning thee,
to bear thee up."

HEY bear me up, O Father, unto Thee,
That blessed angel band,—
They bear me up, till I shall come to Thee,
In Thine own Better Land.

They bear me up ! O Father, bright I see
Those much loved, long loved forms,—
Though hid from mortal view, full clear to me,
To guide me midst life's storms.

It is because their life is hid with Thee,
And Thou art in my soul,
That thus their angel presence is with me,
While sorrows round me roll !

1854.

THE DEPARTED.

HE veil of death hides thee from mortal sight,
Friend ever dear ;—
It opens thine to pure celestial light,
Eternal, clear.

Long tried and faithful servant ! Thou didst run
A weary race !
The distant crown is reached ! Thy crown is won !
Thy resting place !

Thy Lord well knew in weakness thou wast strong,
And on thee laid
A burden of rich gifts, to use them long,
E'en as He bade.

How thou didst strive to spend the treasure well
So largely given,—
How constant toil, no mortal tongue can tell,—
'Tis known in Heaven.

Midst blighted joys thou trodd'st thy path of youth,
Midst griefs thy prime;—
But thou didst glean from all eternal truth,
Vanquishing time.

Thence it would seem thou hadst received a dower
Of strength and love;—
And thy pure soul shed forth a wondrous power
Drawn from above.

Thy toils of life are o'er, for thou didst hear
A heavenly voice,—
“Thy life on earth is ended,—stay not here!”
Thou didst rejoice!

Why should we grieve that the poor suffering clay
Holds thee no more;—
That from earth's trials thou art borne away
To Canaan's shore.

Yet, friend beloved, our tears must warmly flow
That thou art gone!
An awful void is nigh us here below,
We feel alone.

Be near us yet,—because thou art with God,
Be with us still!
And help us on to do, on life's rough road,
Our Father's will.

NEARER TO THEE.

 NEARER, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me :
Still all my song shall be,—
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!

Though, like the wanderer,
The sun gone down,
Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone ;
Yet in my dreams, I'd be
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee.

There let the way appear
Steps unto heaven ;
All that Thou sendest me,
In mercy given ;
Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee.

Then with my waking thoughts,
Bright with Thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs,
Bethel I'll raise ;

So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee.

Or if on joyful wing
Cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars forgot,
Upwards I fly ;
Still all my song shall be,—
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee !



“This is my commandment, that ye love one another,
as I have loved you.”—John xv., 12.



SPIRIT of love, that shrined in Jesus shone,
As shone God's presence o'er the hallowed ark,
Thou glorifiest all thou beamest on,
Robing in beauty what was cold and dark ;
And as from our bright fire full many a spark
Floats on the air, and kindling where it falls,
New light and warmth from all around it calls,
While awe-struck crowds its course resistless mark,
So thou, supreme in loveliness and might,
By Jesus brought on earth, from heart to heart
Rapidly passing, fillest all with light,
And warmth, and holiness ; nor dost depart,
But rising with undying flame above,
Point'st to the throne of Him whose holiest name is Love.

"Abide with us."—Luke xxiv., 29.
John xix., 23.



BIDE with me ! Fast falls the eventide ;
The darkness thickens : Lord ! with me abide ;
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me !

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day ;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away ;
Change and decay in all around I see :
O Thou who changest not, abide with me !

Not a brief glance I beg, a passing word,
But as Thou dwell'st with Thy disciples, Lord—
Familiar, condescending, patient, free,
Come not to sojourn, but abide with me !

Come not in terrors, as the King of kings,
But kind and good, with healing in thy wings ;
Tears for all woes, a heart for every plea ;
Come, Friend of sinners, thus abide with me !

Thou on my head in early youth didst smile,
And, though rebellious and perverse meanwhile,
Thou hast not left me, oft as I left thee :
On to the close, O Lord, abide with me !

I need thy presence every passing hour ;
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power ?
Who like thyself my guide and stay can be ?
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me !

I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless ;
 Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
 Where is death's sting ? where, grave, thy victory ?
 I triumph still, if thou abide with me !

Reveal thyself before my closing eyes,
 Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies ;
 Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee ;
 In life, in death, O Lord ! abide with me.

LEAD THOU ME ON.

LEAD, kindly Light, amid the circling gloom,
 Lead thou me on !
 The night is dark, and I am far from home,
 Lead thou me on !
 Keep thou my feet ; I do not ask to see
 The distant scene,—one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that thou
 Shouldst lead me on !
 I loved to choose and see my path ; but now,
 Lead thou me on !
 I loved the glittering day, and, spite of fears,
 Pride ruled my will ; remember not past years.
 So long thy power hath kept me, sure it still
 Will lead me on,
 O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
 The night is gone ;
 And with the morn those angel faces smile
 Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

A HYMN OF PRAISE.

—o—



RAISE ye the Lord ! Praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord.

Whilst we live will we praise the Lord : we will sing praises unto our God while we have any being.

When we awake in the morning refreshed with sleep ; when we behold the goodly light of the sun, and go forth to perform the duties, and to enjoy the comforts of the day :—our voice of thanksgiving shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord.

When Thou makest darkness and it is night ; when we lie down on our bed in peace ; then will we call to mind the blessings of the day, and praise Thee, our God, who hast provided sleep for man.

When all nature smiles around us ; when the earth is covered with verdure, and the trees with blossoms ; when the birds warble their notes in Thy praise, and innumerable creatures exult in Thy goodness :—we also will join the chorus of nature, and testify that Thou art great and wise, that Thou art kind and faithful.

And in the barren months of winter, when the fields and the woods rejoice no longer, when the tuneful birds are silent, and many creatures are buried in forgetfulness :—then our souls shall not forget Thee, nor shall our lips be

silent in Thy praise ; for Thou crownest every season of the year with Thy goodness.

When Thou fillest our cups with the blessings of life, and the voice of health and gladness is heard in our dwellings ; when our path is pleasant, our prospects cheering, and our spirits lively :—then they shall be employed in showing forth Thy praises, O our God ! for we dwell in the light of Thy countenance.

And when months of vanity and wearisome nights are appointed to us ; when darkness encompasses the path in which we go, and dejection hangs upon our minds ; when we can neither enjoy the blessings of life, nor indulge those lively affections towards Thee, our Maker, which we wish to indulge :—even then will we praise Thee by submission and resignation to Thy will.

Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines ; though the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields yield no meat ; though the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls :—yet will we rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of our salvation.

Amidst all the changes of this mortal life, and amidst all the various dispensations of Thy providence :—in all things will we give thanks and praise Thy name.

Whilst we live will we praise the Lord ; and when we draw near to the gates of death ; when these hands, which have been lifted up to Thee, shall be motionless, and the tongues which have declared Thy praises shall be silent ;—still will we praise Thee, O our Heavenly Father ! in our thoughts ; and this shall be the grateful song of our hearts : “ Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” But the grave shall not put

an end to our songs of thanksgiving ; we will sing praises unto our God while we have any being ; and blessed be Thy name, O Thou fountain of life, our being will never cease. When our voice is entirely lost in death, and our mortal powers are no longer active ; then with more noble powers, and in heavenly strains, will we praise Thee, our God, and this shall be our grateful song : "Thou didst lead us forth by the right way to Thine heavenly kingdom."

Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving, and honour and power and might, be ascribed unto Thee our God for ever and ever. Amen and Amen.

"After this manner, therefore, pray ye:—

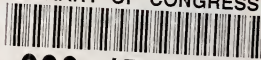
"**O**UR Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation ; but deliver us from evil : for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

FINIS.



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